Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/madworldmymaster0000bret

THE WORKS OF NICHOLAS BRETON

*

This edition is limited to 500 copies on mould-made paper, numbered 1-500, and to 30 copies on hand-made paper, numbered I-XXX. The number of this copy is

20

A MAD WORLD MY MASTERS

AND OTHER PROSE WORKS
BY NICHOLAS BRETON

EDITED BY
URSULA KENTISH-WRIGHT

VOLUME I

THE CRESSET PRESS
LTD: LONDON
1929

Made and printed in Great Britain

CONTENTS

*

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	vii
FANTASTICKS	1
WITS TRENCHMOUR	53
A MAD WORLD MY MASTERS	109
CHARACTERS UPON ESSAIES	147
THE COURT AND COUNTRY	181

INTRODUCTION

*

NICHOLAS BRETON has perhaps given us more insight into the domestic life of the Elizabethans than any other writer of the period. He describes the manners and customs of his day with inimitable charm and humour, and his works contain a variety of shrewd character studies ranging from the labourer to the courtier. Both his poetry and his prose are of a high quality, and should take their place in the foremost rank of Elizabethan literature. Yet, strange to say, his works have been much neglected in the present day. In his own time, however, Breton was widely appreciated, judging from the numerous editions of his works and his many imitators both during his lifetime and immediately after his death. The appeal of his writing, to those of us who love it, lies partly in its being entirely English in style and sentiment, and we love his jibes at the foreigner for his affectations—his kissing of hands, his eating with forks, his bowings and gestures.

There are very few actual facts known about the life of Nicholas Breton, and there is no record of the date of his birth or of his death. There is however a certain amount of information known about his ancestors and family and about the surroundings in which he was brought up. Many of these particulars have been obtained from the wills of his father and of his great grandfather, both gentlemen of rich inheritance. His father, William Breton, was the youngest son of a large

land owner, and appears to have been a merchant, as the property bequeathed in his will included a wharf on the Thames. William Breton resided in Red Cross Street, Cripple Gate, where we must presume Nicholas was born approximately between 1545 and 1548. As there are no registers of St. Giles Church, Cripple Gate, earlier than 1561 the date of his birth is pure conjecture based on the date of his father's will. This will, which was dated February 12th, 1557, and proved on the 13th March, 1558, contained a proviso that the Chamber of London should be paid £5 yearly for the "finding and bringing up" of his eldest son Richard and the rest of his children. This proviso points to the fact that the children were all quite young when the will was made and Nicholas was the second child. I should therefore place his birth as late as 1548, which would make him nine years old when his father's will was made, twenty-nine when his first work was published and forty-four when he married. This will contains some interesting references to old London and gives a picturesque glimpse into the home of Nicholas Breton's boyhood; I therefore give some extracts from it.

"The 12th day of February in the year of our salvation by the death and passion of our most blessed Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ a thousand five hundred fifty seven. . . . I William Breton of London of the Parish of Saint Giles without Cripplegate of London Gentleman . . . bequeath unto Elizabeth my wife my chief capital mansion house in Red Cross Street in the foresaid Parish of Saint Giles without Cripplegate of

London wherein I now inhabit and dwell together with the garden tenements and all other the appurtenances to the said capital mansion belonging or other with used or occupied And also all my tenements and hereditaments with the appurtenances in Barbycan and Red Cross Street in the said Parish of Saint Giles which I had purchased to me and mine heirs of William Dixe gent Item I further give and bequeath unto the same Elizabeth my wife all that my quay and wharf called Dyse quay* with all the tenements and other the appurtenances thereupon builded or thereunto belonging situate near Billings Gate and in the Parish of Saint Dunstan in the east within the Citie of London Item I give and bequeath unto the said Elizabeth my wife one hundred pounds in money and the one half of all my plate household stuff and implements hereafter not bequeathed and all her apparel and all such jewels as she hath in her custody or used to wear and ten kine now remaining and being at Walthamstow in the County of Essex Item I give and bequeath unto the said Richard Breton mine eldest son and to his heirs for ever all my tenements in London or in the suburbs of the same with all and singular their appurtenances above not bequeathed to my said wife amounting together to the yearly value of thirty nine pounds or thereabouts that is to say one tenement in Eastcheap called the Bell in the tenure of Nicholas Wyatt Bochier of the yearly value

* Dyse or Dice Quay stood on the site of the present Customs House in Billingsgate.

of nine pounds twenty pence two tenements in Tower Street in the Parish of Saint Dunstan in the East in the holding of the wife of William Austed Wax chandler deceased one shop in New Fishes Street in the holding of William Davies fishmonger one tenement in the Parish of Saint John Walbroke in the holding of Thomas Hewes Skynner one tenement in Finckes Lane near the Poultrey in the holding of Thomas Sares one tenement in the Parish of Saint Andrew next Baynardes Castle in the holding of Sir Frances Jobson Knight one tenement in the Parish of Saint James at Garlike hithe in the holding of the wife of Xpottifer Macham Taylor deceased one vault or cellar in the same Parish of Saint James at Garlikehith in the holding of the widow Gardiner and the tenement brew house and Inn called the George in Aldersgate Street in the Parish of Saint Butulphe without Aldersgate and all the tenements thereunto belonging in the holding of Cuthbert Hope And one tenement in the Parish of Saint Butulphe in the holding of Christopher Terington carpenter To have and to hold unto my said son Richard and to his heirs for ever. . . . After the death or marriage of my said wife then I will and ordain that the chamber of London shall have the receipt order rule of all such rents and revenues of the said tenements in the said City as been above bequeathed or appointed in possession or reversion to my said son until the same my son shall accomplish the said age of twenty two years of the profits and rents whereof I will the said chamber of London shall have five pounds yearly until

the said age of my son And the rest of the same rents and profits to be employed and bestowed to thus finding and bringing up of my said son and of the rest of my children. . . . Item I give and bequeath unto Nicholas Breton my son all that my manor of Burgh in the Marsh with the appurtenances in the County of Lincoln and all the lands tenements revisions services and hereditaments to the same belonging or in any wise appertaining And all those my lands and tenements in Wykes in the County of Essex called Nelmes which I purchased of Henry Breton my brother."* As was the custom of the day the beds of the household form important bequests. They were cherished heirlooms, the best bed being invariably left to the eldest son. "Item I give and bequeath to my said son Nicholas Breton forty pounds in money one salt all gilt with a cover and marked W.E. and six silver spoons and the gilt bedstead and bed that I lie in at London with the Tester and curtains of blue and yellow sarcenet and all other the apparel of the same bed to be delivered unto him when he shall accomplish his said age of twenty four years."

The will, which is of great length, contains similar bequests to his three daughters and many legacies to relations and servants; and the poor of London and the scholars of Cambridge were not forgotten: "To the widow Bruet ten shillings and to the widow Sparrow

* This and the ensuing extracts from the will are taken from Grosart's "Life of Breton" (Chertsey Worthies Library). I have modernised the spelling and the legal abbreviations.

and other three of the poorest creatures in Beach Lanes ten shillings Item I give and bequeath to one hundred of the most impotent and poorest persons in the foresaid parish of Saint Giles without Cripplegate of London five pounds in money that is to say to every of them twelve pence a piece Item I will and ordain that my Executors shall buy and provide in the summer yearly during four years next after my death five loads of coals and also shall provide an house to lay them in in the summer to be given and distributed in the Winter amongst the poorest inhabitants of the said Parish of Saint Giles Item I give and bequeath to and amongst twenty of the most poorest and impotent persons in Walthamstow twenty shillings that is to say twelve pence a piece to every of them Item I give and bequeath unto Audrey my dairy woman twenty shillings Item I give and bequeath to Alice chandler that was my servant forty shillings Item I give and bequeath unto the Hospital of Saint Bartholomews in Smithfield in London twenty pounds in money upon condition that as well the poor in the same hospital as the Children in both the schools there do pray every morning and every evening unto almighty God for Mr. William Capon and me as benefactors of the said hospital." He left ten pounds for the "poorest scholars of the University of Cambridge."

There follows the disposal of his wardrobe giving some interesting details of a gentleman's apparel, "Item I give and bequeath unto Thomas Sackford of Grays Inn my best Gown of Cloth furred with squirrel and

faced with martins Item I give and bequeath unto the same Thomas Sackford my doublet of Crimson Satin . . . Item I give and bequeath unto my Father in Law John Bacon my Spanish Cap of Cloth and so much fine cloth as shall make him a Coat to the same Item I give and bequeath unto my brother Henry Breton my damask gown welted with velvet and faced with budge* Item I give and bequeath unto Mr. Edward Waldegrave my Short gown of Satin my best black coat of cloth and my crimson Taffeta doublet and my Russet doublet and my satin Jacket Item I give and bequeath unto Richard my Son my best damask gown with the Embroidered guard and my two velvet Jackets Embroidered and a doublet of Crimson satin that is unmade and my doublet of purple satin my two best shirts and my best velvet hose my ring of gold that I use to wear with Thonycle† and my seal of silver Item I give and bequeath unto my son Nicholas my doublet of black satin stitched and my doublet of black satin with whipped Lace my white Hanger and my sword and my buckler And to my son Richard my gilt Skayne‡ my Corselet and my privy coat All which apparel and other things above bequeathed to my said Sons or either of them I will my said wife shall have the Custody and order of until they shall accomplish the foresaid ages of twenty four."

Nicholas Breton's mother was Elizabeth Bacon, daughter of one John Bacon, so there may possibly have been a distant kinship between Nicholas Breton and Lord Bacon

* Lamb's fur. † The Onyx? ‡ A short sword or knife.

to whom he dedicated his "Characters upon Essays" (1615). His mother married as her second husband George Gascoigne the poet. Breton was educated at Oriel College, Oxford, as we learn from an entry in the diary of the Reverend Richard Madox.* Madox was the chaplain on board the *Leicester*, the boat which, under the command of General Fenton, went on a voyage of discovery hoping to find a passage to China. The diary, which is an account of the voyage, contains this entry on the 14th March, 1582: "I dyned with Mr. Carlil at his brother Hudson's who is governor of Antwerp. . . . There was Mr. Brytten† once of Oriel College, who made Wyts Wil. He speaketh the Italian wel." So from this we also learn that Breton was travelling on the continent at this time and Madox's testimony as to his knowledge of Italian is borne out by the many references to the Italian writers throughout his works. Unfortunately we have no further particulars of his life at Oriel as there is no mention of him in the College records of this period.

Breton was married to Ann Sutton on the 14th January, 1593, [the Register reads "1592-3," the later date is taken in accordance with the modern calendar], at Saint Giles Church, Cripple Gate. His very numerous works of poetry and prose date from 1577 to 1626, the latter being approximately the date of his death, as his name appears no more.

* British Museum. Cotton MSS. appendix 47, fol: 50.

† This form of spelling the name and also that of "Brittaine" was common contemporarily.

Breton appears to have been befriended by Sir Philip Sidney, and, after his death, by his sister the Countess of Pembroke. In 1592 he dedicated his poem "A Pilgrimage to Paradiso" to her and with it another poem entitled "The Countess of Pembroke's Love." "The Countess of Pembroke's Passion," an unsigned poem in manuscript is undoubtedly by Breton too, though the authorship has been wrongly attributed to the Countess. "Maries Exercises," a book of prayers, is also dedicated to her, and here he describes himself as "Your Ladyship's sometime unworthy poet and now and ever poor Beadman Nick Breton." His great patroness seems to have extricated him from some serious misfortune and apparently gave him a helping hand when he had fallen on evil days.

In the dedication to "The Pilgrimage to Paradiso" he writes: "Your poor unworthy named poet, who by the indescretion of his youth, the malice of envy, and the disgrace of ingratitude had utterly perished, had not the hand of your honour revived the heart of humility." Later he evidently lost her favour if this passage from "Wit's Trenchmour" can be considered as autobiographical: "With her countenance she graced him, with good words she favoured him, with her bounty she relieved him and would suffer no man to hurt him. . . . Thus did this Princess entertain thy poor gentleman, till by the faction of the malicious, the deceitful working of the envious and the desart of his own unworthyness, finding in the deceiving of this his bright sun, the sinking of his too happy favour, supping

up his sorrow to himself, taking leave for a time, to travel about a little idle business, in a cold snowy day passing over an unknown plain, not looking well to his way, or being ordained to the misery of such misfortune, fell so deep down a Saw-pit, that he shall repent the fall while he lives."

In 1601—four years after the publication of "Wit's Trenchmour"—he dedicated "The Ravished Soul" to the Countess, and the following lines show that he was evidently restored to her favour: "To the Right Honourable discreet and vertuous Lady, the Nourisher of the Learned and favourer of the Godly, my singular good Lady, the Lady Mary Countess of Pembroke. . . . To the honour of whose commandment avowing the duty of my heart's service, in all humble thankfulness for your bountiful undeserved goodness, praying for your eternal happiness, I take my leave, your Ladyship's in all humbleness, Nicholas Breton."

The Countess of Pembroke surrounded herself with the literary geniuses of the day, and it was perhaps in her household that Shakespeare and Breton became friends, as there are several indications of such a friendship. The Countess's sons William Herbert Earl of Pembroke and Philip Earl of Montgomery were Shakespeare's patrons, to whom Heminge and Condell dedicated the first folio, which dedication states clearly that Shakespeare received "much favour" from them during his lifetime.

At the beginning of "Wits Will or Wills Wit"—one of Breton's most important works—were attached some

commendatory verses signed "W.S."* These verses bear a resemblance to some of Shakespeare's sonnets with the repeated punning on the name "Will." The first extant edition of this book and the one to which the verses are attached is dated 1597, but there were earlier editions as it was entered in the Stationer's Register in 1580 and was mentioned in Madox's diary in 1582. If the earliest edition contained the verses they could not have been Shakespeare's as he would only have been sixteen years old at that time. I personally have little doubt that they were his and that they were specially written for the new edition.

There is another indication of a friendship between the two writers, in the fact that there are a large number of lines and ideas in Breton's works which Shakespeare seems to have taken and elaborated. In comparing the dates of their various works, in one instance it seems to be Shakespeare who borrowed from Breton and in another Breton who borrowed from Shakespeare, but of course we must remember that the actual dating of Shakespeare's plays is a great deal conjecture, and in many cases it is impossible to say for how many years a play was acted and well known to the public before it was first printed. The probability therefore is that they were intimate friends who absorbed each other's works to the extent of consciously and unconsciously quoting one another's phrases. Breton was about sixteen years older than Shakespeare, and the influence the older writer had on the young

* See vol. ii, p. 22.

genius seems very marked. Indeed, of all his contemporary writers Breton seems to me to be the most like him in general tone and outlook; the resemblance is not merely in the common expressions of the day. In Breton's prose we find the same blythe sweet spirit as in Shakespeare's comedies, and indeed the prose of "As You Like It" might almost have been written by Breton but for the magical touch which was Shakespeare's alone. Breton like Shakespeare was a great observer of nature and had a real love of the country; their descriptions of the country-side are so akin that, reading, one cannot but imagine them rambling through the woods together listening to the birds and turning their songs into verse, or in the open meadows watching the young hares and the conies at play in the morning sunshine.

In the "Miseries of Mavillia"* there is a prose version of Shakespeare's famous lyric "Crabbed Age and Youth" from "The Passionate Pilgrims." Deloney also included the same passage in his "Garland of Good Will," but there is of course the possibility that all three writers were indebted to some earlier author. Plagiarism was rife amongst the Elizabethans. They had no compunction about borrowing freely from one another—plots, ideas, characters, phrases—anything that took their fancy.

"A Post with a Packet of Mad Letters" contains "A Letter of Advice to a Young Courtier,"† which it is interesting to compare with Polonius's advice to

* See vol. ii, p. 157. † See vol. ii, p. 222.

Laertes ("Hamlet," Act 1, Scene 3) and the Countess's advice to Bertram ("All's Well that Ends Well," Act 1, Scene 1). A very similar passage appears in Lyly's "Euphues," most probably the source from which both Shakespeare and Breton borrowed.

Most of Breton's Books were dedicated to illustrious personages, but one of the most interesting dedications is that to John Florio of "A Merry Dialogue betwixt Taker and Mistaker."* This dedication is written with more personal feeling than most of his formal dedications and shows a love and affection for Florio.

Another of Breton's friends was Ben Jonson, who eulogises him in these verses printed before Breton's poems, "Melancholike Humours."

"Thou, that wouldst find the habit of true passion,
And see a mind attir'd in perfect strains:
Not wearing moods, as gallants do a fashion,
In these pied times, only to show their brains,

"Look here on Breton's work, the master print:
Where such perfections to the life do rise;
If they seem wry, to such as look asquint,
The fault's not in the object, but their eyes.

"For, as one coming with a lateral view
Unto a cunning piece wrought perspective,
Wants faculty to make a censure true;
So with this Author's readers will it thrive:

"Which being eyed directly, I divine
His proof their praise, will meet, as in this line."

* See p. 111.

And what of the character of the man as it is revealed to us through his writings? He was deeply religious (of the protestant faith, judging from his expression of horror at the massacre of Saint Bartholomew* and passages in "Elogy of Queen Elizabeth"†). He had borne "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," gaining patience and content through bitter experience, moving through life unmoved and uncontaminated by the worldliness all around him; keeping his outlook simple and unspoilt, and following, to the best of his ability, the precepts laid down for an English gentleman in "The Court and Country," with purity as his outstanding quality. Over and over again throughout his works he emphasises his abhorance of sex immorality, and in his book "The Dignity or Indignity of Man"‡ makes comparisons of the habits of men with those of beasts and birds, much to the detriment of the former. It is the same kind of theme which Shakespeare introduces in "The Tempest" by placing the character of Stephano, a type of the lowest product of civilisation, beside Caliban, the dregs of savage life, who yet appears the nobler animal of the two. Breton tells us that part of his work was translated from the Italian but gives no clue to the original. Although Breton may lack Marlowe's power there is a strength in his very simplicity. His sweet philosophy and sane outlook on life is full of dignified beauty, for he has that quality of more value than brilliancy—a healthy grasp of the meaning of life. He has "Wisdome

* See "Wits Trenchmour," p. 93 † See vol. ii, pp. 4, 8, and 9.
‡ Not included in this selection.

tempered with Fancy, Beauty indifferent to Frenzy and Content free from Vanity."

"Fantasticks" published in 1626 was Breton's last and, perhaps, most polished work. These charming essays will always be amongst his most popular work, for the England he is describing differs little from our England of to-day. It is pleasant to read that the Elizabethans ate "Melowne and Cucumber" in August; and that "Oyle and viniger give attendance on the Sallet"; or to know that July was a stormy month when the "stones of congealed water cut off the eares of the corne: and the black storms affright the faint hearted"; while in August the heat of the sun "dries up the standing ponds, Wythereth the sappy leaves and scorcheth the skin of the naked"; whereas November, as now, was "The discomfort of nature."

There is the same sort of fascination in reading Breton's "Hours" as in walking down the high street of a country town when the windows are lit up and the blinds remain undrawn, for there is great satisfaction in knowing what every one is doing at each hour of the day. The contents on the title page include eight essays on the Earth, Water, Fire, Fish, Beasts, Man and Woman—which curiously enough were omitted from the book itself. "The Twelve Moneths" were in all probability suggested to Breton by twelve fourteenth century Italian sonnets written by Folgari,* for we know from Madox's diary that Breton was an Italian scholar. Some thirty-five years after their publication Matthew

* These sonnets were beautifully translated by D. G. Rosetti.

Stevenson published as an original work his "The Twelve Moneths," and only a glance is needed to see that he took this from Breton's work, if not word for word at any rate thought for thought. For example, under October Breton writes "a fire and a paire of cards keepe the Ghests in the Ordinary, and Tobacco is held very precious of the Rheume," and Stevenson "A good fire and a paire of cards keep the guests in the ordinary; and the smoak of Tobacco is precious and held sovereign for Catarrhs, and troublesome Rheums."

"Wits Trenchmour in a conference had betwixt an Angler and a Scholler" was published in 1597 and there exists only one copy of the original book, which, like so many of our literary treasures, has been lost to England, being now in the Huntington Library, California.* "Trenchmour" was a lively dance of the period which had great popularity. Robert Burton, describing it in "The Anatomy of Melancholy," says "Who can withstand it? be we young or old, . . . there is no remedy; we must dance Trenchmore over tables, chairs and stools."

William Harbert or Herbert to whom the work is dedicated lived at "Red Castle in Mountgombryshiere," which is now known as Powis Castle, the seat of the Earl of Powis.

A fashion for books on fishing was created by the "Treatise" attributed to Dame Juliana Berners, pub-

* I have taken my text from Grosart's which was taken direct from the original before it went to America.

lished towards the end of the fifteenth century: there followed a number of books on angling throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but "The Compleat Angler" (1653) is the only one which concerns us with regard to "Wits Trenchmour," for there is little doubt that it was Breton's book which Walton took as his model both in style and construction (both books being written in dialogue form). Breton dwells more on the "metaphorical kind of fishing" and Walton on the more practical side, and although Walton has extensively elaborated Breton's idea, and written a much fuller treatise on angling, both writers have the same skill in bringing the English country-side before our eyes. As one reads one feels the peace of the meadows as the stream flows gently on its way, and the setting sun catches the water where it leaves the overhanging willows.

In the character of the parvenu inn-keeper so proud of having sent his son to the University, we get another of Breton's shrewd character studies.

The book contains one of the earliest references to the new fashion of using forks for eating, which as well as toothpicks were introduced into England from the Continent.

The Elizabethans were terribly brutal in their sports and one is glad to find Breton having a thrust at the barbaric sports of bull and bear baiting where with cutting sarcasm he describes the new (fictitious) sport of ape-baiting.

Towards the end of "Wits Trenchmour" occur the

autobiographical passages (which I have already mentioned) referring to the Countess of Pembroke, and she would indeed have been hard-hearted had she been able to resist this appeal which evidently gained its object.

"A Mad World my Masters" was originally published in 1603 under the title "A Merry Dialogue betwixt the Taker and Mistaker," and republished in 1635 with the additional title of "A Mad World my Masters."

The book contains a number of the inimitable character sketches in which Breton excelled, and abounds in a dry humour tinged with cynicism. The rogueries of Dorindo the Taker remind one of Greene's "Cuthbert the Coney Catcher"—but to compare Breton's writing with Greene's is like comparing a gentle May breeze, laden with the scent of flowers, to a rude March wind blowing grit into one's face.

"Characters upon Essaies," published in 1615, was dedicated to Lord Bacon with an apology for presuming to produce a volume of Essays. Just at this time there were some furious quarrels raging between various authors over plagiarism. John Stevens published the same year a book called "Essayes and Characters," in which he repudiates an attack from Sir Thomas Overbury who accused him of having copied his book of "Characters" (1614). Breton appears to have steered clear of these quarrels and to have ignored the many imitators of his own work.

"The Court and Country" was first printed in 1618. The book consists of a discourse between a Courtier

and a Countryman, as to the respective merits of their surroundings and mode of life, which it is interesting to compare with the discussion between Touchstone and Corin in "As You Like It" (Act 3, Sc. 2). It is written in the same vein as "Fantasticks," with delightful pen pictures of life in "Merrie England" mingled with some sound philosophy. Though the discourse contains some of Breton's best work it is on the whole too drawn out. The novelty of forks is again referred to, also tobacco smoking. The many references to tobacco by the contemporaries of Shakespeare emphasise the surprising fact that he never mentioned it.

"The Elogy of Queen Elizabeth"* dedicated to Robert Cecil Earl of Salisbury is written in Breton's own remarkably fine handwriting, with his signature. Although Breton draws Elizabeth's character with a very flattering pen one feels his homage genuinely represents the adulation in which she was held (for there is no doubt her people idolised her). He has implicit belief in her divine gifts, but it is interesting to find that with all his flattery he does not dwell upon her personal beauty, merely describing her countenance as being "of true majesty."

The references to the Pope and "The Roasters of Men" leave us in no doubt as to Breton's own religious beliefs.

"The Wil of Wit" was entered in the Stationer's Register in 1580, but there is no extant copy of this

* British Museum. Harleian MSS. 6207, fos: 14-22. The original manuscript has no title.

edition. The next editions were 1596 and 1597, but the earliest edition in the British Museum—from which I have taken my text—is that of 1599. This volume also contains "The Authors Dreame," "The Scholler and the Souldiour," "The Miseries of Mavillia," "The Praise of Vertuous Ladies," "A Dialogue betweene Anger and Patience," and "A Phisitians Letter." The book was "For the fifth time imprinted in 1606 and "The Wil of Wit" and "The Miseries of Mavillia" were published again, separately, in 1636. Breton had a disconcerting way of redating his books to each new edition, which is apt to be misleading. It is particularly unfortunate that there is no copy of the 1580 edition as that would decide the question of Shakespeare's authorship of the verses signed "W.S." attached to the later editions.

From the manner in which Madox mentions this book in his diary, it is evident that it had brought Breton fame amongst his contemporaries.

"The Wil of Wit," which is an allegory written in the form of a dialogue between two friends "Will" and "Wit," draws the moral of the ineffectualness of Will without Wit and vice versa. Though the book has a quaint charm and is full of "wise saws," I should not place it on so high a level as "Fantasticks" or "Wits Trenchmour." "The Authors Dream" is a continuation of the allegory, and contains thoughtful advice to those aspiring to mount the hill of fame, showing the relative values of Wit and Reason, Folly and Fancy, Wisdom and Care necessary for the attainment of Vertue and Fame.

"The Scholler and the Souldiour" opens very feebly, but there is some excuse for the Scholler's meaningless meanderings, on the first page, in that he is discoursing "with a hungry stomack (having not dined nor supped well many a day before)." The discourse improves as it proceeds and one is grateful for the exquisite description of the nightingale and other passages, also the excellent character studies of the Scholler and the Soldier whose diverse points of view are interesting.

There is a notable Shakespearean simile in the Scholler's speech on "honour,"* which bears a striking resemblance to Falstaff's in "Henry IV" (Pt. 1), Act 5, Sc. 1.

"The Miseries of Mavillia" is the romance of "the most unfortunate lady that ever lived," written in the form of an autobiography, and divided into "Miseries" in lieu of "Chapters." Mavillia describes the calamities of her life with a simple naturalness which is infinitely pathetic, a baby alone in the world ill treated by the laundress who had adopted her, she says "When my hours of breakfast, dinner, or supper came, then (as I was wont) I called Mother, but I heard no sound of Daughter." The descriptions of Mavillia's wanderings with her faithful Page are full of romantic beauty, and how poignant is her grief after his death when, being ill treated by the old shepherds, she exclaims "Oh, it kild my heart, and yet I could not die, and kill my self I would not, for feare of God's displeasure: for desperation is the high way to damnation! God deliver me from

* See vol. ii, p. 78.

that ill thought."—a passage which can hold its own with the best prose in the English language.

Breton enters into some unpleasant details when describing the last illnesses of the old Shepherd and his wife, but it is all very human and full of reality, showing the shrinking of youth from the physical infirmities of age which is summed up in the line, "It is pitiful to a young mind to be an old man's nurse." The theme of youth's revolt against age is again introduced in Mavillia's natural repulsion at the attentions of the old dotard who woos her; it is here that we find the prose version of "Crabbed Age and Youth."

In the third misery we have the interesting list of Mavillia's household duties which—be it noted—includes the scalding of the milk pans. We are too apt to think that hygiene with respect to the handling of food belongs only to the twentieth century, but the Elizabethans were very faddy in this respect.

The romance goes off towards the end, and by the "Fifth Misery" one begins to weary of this lachrymose lady who resignedly remarks "Since I am born to misery God's will be done." The final catastrophe is very revolting and unlike Breton, who possibly took the incident from some older story.

Breton was not altogether free from the taint of plagiarism, and his "Praise of Vertuous Ladies and Gentlewomen" owes not a little to Chaucer's Tale of Melibeus, in particular to those passages where Dame Prudence defends her sex.

"The Post with a Packet of Mad Letters" enjoyed

enormous popularity, running into eleven editions between 1602 and 1637. I have made a characteristic selection from the letters, which number in all 153. I have taken the text of the earliest letters from the 1609 edition (for the fourth time enlarged), which is the earliest edition in the British Museum, and the later letters from the 1633 edition consisting of two parts. The 1609 edition has a quaint woodcut of the "Postman" in typical Elizabethan costume galloping over endless Molehills and blowing a bugle. The 1633 and 1637 editions also have a similar picture, but with the Postman's clothes and style of hairdressing brought up to date!

A "Letter of Advice to a Young Courtier" is of especial interest for its similarity to speeches in "Hamlet" and "All's Well that Ends Well," to which I have already drawn attention.

"A Merry Letter of News of Complaints" reminds us that the same complaints were rife then as now. If one takes the correspondence page of any daily newspaper one finds the identical "grumbles" going on to-day that are prominent in Elizabethan literature. First and foremost is the traffic problem and that of street noises, which appear to have been almost as bad then as now! Dekker in his "Seven Deadly Sins of London" (1606) writes: "In every street, carts and coaches make such a thundering as if the world ran upon wheels: at every corner, men, women and children meet in such shoals, that posts are set up of purpose to strengthen the houses, lest with jostling one another they should

shoulder them down. Besides, hammers are beating in one place, tubs hooping in another, pots clinking in a third, water tankards running at tilt in a fourth." The servant difficulty was then felt after the death of the old feudal system, and one can find plenty of quotations illustrating alarm at the unemployment menace, disgust at women aping men's attire, laxity of Sunday observance and so on.

The letter "To my dearest beloved friend on Earth H. W." signed "N. B." seems to have some autobiographical significance. It did not appear in the editions earlier than that of 1633—which points to the probability of its being a personal letter inserted by the Editor of the new edition after Breton's death. The references to the death of his children coincide with some burials recorded in the Registers of St. Giles, Cripplegate.

Breton's works gain by being read aloud, for in addition to dramatic expression he has a mastery of the sound of words, indicating the emotion he wishes to express in the sound of the word he uses.

In short to quote his Elizabethan Publisher his works "when read in a winter's evening by a good fire, or a summer's morning, in the greene fields: may serve both to purge melancholy from the minde and grosse humours from the body. Pleasant for youth, recreative for age, profitable for all, and not hurtfull to any."

URSULA KENTISH WRIGHT.

April 1929.

NOTE

*

The very varied spelling in the original texts has been followed throughout, with the exception of the change of U to V and I to J. Breton has a curious use of accents over the double e as in thée. They were not used consistently throughout his works. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and the punctuation altered in a few cases where the sense required it. There was no object in reproducing these errors when Breton himself says: "What faults are escaped in the printing, finde by discretion, and excuse the Author, by other worke that let him from attendance to the Presse." All the texts have been taken from the originals in the B.M. with the exception of Wits Trenchmour, of which the only copy is in America, and Court & Country, of which there is no copy in the B.M. In these two works the texts have been taken from Grossart.

The generous help and kindness received from scholars interested in Elizabethan research has been one of the greatest pleasures of my work.

I wish to express my gratitude and sincere thanks to the following :—

Miss Susanna Corner for very helpful criticism and for much useful information.

Miss Grace Latham, Mr. Charles Pendrill, Mr. C. K. Edmonds, and Mr. B. H. Newdigate for information which I have used in my notes.

Mr. W. A. Briscoe for the loan of valuable material.

Miss Christabel Ellis for searching the registers of

Burgh in the Marsh (endeavouring to trace the date of Breton's death) ; and to several other friends and members of my family who have helped me with this book.

To the Publishers themselves I am also greatly indebted for their unfailing courtesy and kind assistance throughout my work.

URSULA KENTISH WRIGHT.

FANTASTICKS

SERVING FOR A

PERPETUALL PROGNOSTICATION

1. The World.
2. Love.
3. Money.
4. The Spring.
5. Summer.
6. Harvest.
7. Winter.
8. The 12 Moneths.
9. Christmas.
10. Lent.
11. Good Friday.
12. Easter Day.
13. Morning.
14. The 12 Houres.
15. Midnight.
16. The Conclusion.

1626

To the worshipfull and worthy Knight, Sir Marke Ive *of* Rivers Hall *in* Essex, Nicholas Breton *wisheth on earth hearts ease, and heaven hereafter.*

Sir, Your many favors, and my small deserts, make mee study how to discharge my selfe of ingratitude, which not knowing better how to doe, then by the labour of my spirit, to shew the nature of my love, I have thought good to present your patience with this little volume of varieties, in which, though the Title promise no matter of great worth, yet it may be, if you peruse it, you shall finde somewhat that you may like in it: howsoever it be, it may serve you in the Winter, to keep you from sleep by the fireside, and in the Summer in shady walkes, to passe away idle time.

In briefe, wishing it of that nature, that might come nerre the worthinesse of your acceptation, I leave it with my better service, to the favor of your good discretion: and so in all humility rest,

Yours affectionately to command N. B.

To the Reader

It was my hap of late, walking thorow the fields, to light upon a peece of paper, in which I found a kind of discourse, set down upon an imagination of midnight. By whom it was written, I know not, but by whomsoever, I liked it so well, that wishing my selfe able to doe halfe soe well, I fell into an humor of imitating the veyne, so neer as I could, in description of the twelve houres, the twelve moneths, and some speciall dayes in the yere: how wel to your liking I know not; but my labour herein hath not bin a little, & my desire much, I meane to doe well; which if I have not, I can be but sory, that my dull wit hath not bin fed with a more pleasing humour: but if you be able to judge of the worth of it, and like it, I shall be more glad then proud of it: howsoever it be, hoping of your kindnes, I leave it to your like censure; & so, loth to entertaine your patience with a long tale to little purpose, I thus conclude, and in affection and discretion, I rest,

Your friend, N. B.

*

TOUCHING my opinion of the world, I will tell you as briefly as I can, what I thinke of it: a place wherein are contained the variety of things: Men thinke, women talk, beasts féed, birds flye, fishes swim, and wormes créep: ayre pearseth, windes blow, cold nippeth, fire heateth, grasse groweth, and time withereth. Wealth is a jewell, and poverty is a plague: Conscience is a charge, and Care is a burden. Pride is a Lord of misrule, and beauty is painted. Mars must yéeld to Mercury, and Diana is a strange woman: Cupid is an idle invention, and all is as good as nothing. Love is more talked of then proved. Covetousnesse the key of wit, Nature the trouble of Reason, and Will the master of the Senses, Beauty is an eye sore, Learning a taske, Valour a heat, and reason a study. A King, a great man: a Souldier, a stout man: a Courtier, a fine man: a Lawyer, a wise man: a Merchant, a rich man: a Begger a poore man: and an honest man, an honest man.

Fayre weather, is chearfull: foule weather is melancholicke. The day is lightsome, and the night is darksom. Meate is necessary, and sléepe is easefull, and drinke doth well, and exercise doth not amisse. Law is good, and punishment is meet, and reward would be thought on: and fooles would be pityed, and so. Opinions differ, and Judgements vary, and Time travailes, and Trueth is a vertue, and wisdome an honor: and honor is a title, and Grace a gift, and

Patience a blessing, and Content a Kingdome: and so from one thing to another, a trouble in all. A kingdome, full of care: wit full of trouble: power full of charge: youth full of action: Age full of griefe: and none content with his condition: wishing in one, willing in another: thinking in one, doing in another: working in one, crossing in another: thoughts, words, and déeds, so different in their effects, that for ought I can see in it, when I have well considered of it, I can say this much of it, He is happy that hath not to doe with it. And not to dwell too long upon it, to conclude my opinion briefly of it, I hold it a Labyrinth of wit, and the toyle of understanding, the pilgrimage of patience, and the purgatory of reason.

Farewell.

*

TOUCHING my Judgement of Love, it is, if it bee any thing, such a thing to speake of, that to tell truly, I know not well what to say of it: but yet what I imagine of it, I will tell you: at the first, I ghesse, it was an old nothing, to exercise wit in idlenes, and now, is a kind of new-nothing to fëed folly with imagination: but be it what it will be, or may be, this wanton Love that this world is too full of, whatsoever it is, thus much I find of it: It is begotten by the eyes, bred in the braines, walkes in the tongue, growes with the flesh, and dyes in an humour: and this ill commonly doth trouble wit, hinder Arte, hurt Nature, disgrace Reason, lose time, and spoile substance: It crosseth wisdome, serveth Beautie, and sotteth Folly: weakneth strength, and baseth Honour: It is only Willes darling, Patience triall, and Passions torture, the pleasure of melancholy, and the play of madnesse, the delight of varieties, and the deviser of vanities: The Virgins cracke, and the Widowes Crosse: The Batchelors bane and the married mans Purgatory: the Yong mans misery and the Ageds Consumption: The abuse of Learning, the Ground of Envy, the stirrer of wrath, and the cause of mischiefe. The disquiet of the mind, the distractor of the Wit, the disturber of the Senses, and the destruction of the whole body. A fained god, and idle fancy, a kind of fury, and in some kind a frenzy. To conclude, I hold it an Invention of idlenesse, and an Imagination of Indiscretion: the plague of people, and the mocke of the World.

 Farewell.

*

To tell you mine opinion of money, I thinke it the Monarch of the world: the maintainer of Pride, the Nurse of Covetousnesse, the Steward of Lechery, the sower of Sedition, the cause of war, the sacke of a City, and the overthrow of a Campe: The Gluttons Purveyour, and the Drunkards Cupbearer: The Thiefes tempter, and the Hangmans Master: The misguider of Wit, the corrupter of Conscience, the blinder of Reason, and the overthrow of Honour: the Usurers God, the poore mans oppression, the Lawyers hope, & the Laborers hire: doth good to few, but hurt to many: puls down the Churches, and builds the faire houses, makes the Prodigall an Ape, and the miser dogged: makes Bridges over the Sea, and fire in mens braines: fetcheth the Beasts from the Wildernesse, and the Birds from the Ayre: it drawes fansies out of fine Wits, and eloquence from learned mouths: It makes friends foes, and enemies friends: It serves all professions, all qualities, and conditions, from the King to the Begger. In summe, not to talk too much of it, having so little of it: I thus conclude my opinion of it: I thinke it a necessary drosse, and a dangerous mettall, the reliefe of the honest, and the ruine of the wicked.

Farewell.

THE SPRING

*

It is now Spring: a Time blest of the Heavens for the comfort of the Earth, now begins the Sunne to give light unto the Ayre, and with the replexion * of his beames to warme the cold earth: the Beasts of the woods looke out into the plaines, and the fishes out of the déepe run up into the shallow waters, the bréeding fowles fall to building of their nests, and the senselesse creatures gather life into their bodies, the Birds tune their throats, to entertaine the Sunne rising, and the little flies begin to flocke in the ayre: now Cupid begins to nocke his Arrowes and sharpe their heads: and Venus, if she be, will be knowne what she is: Now Pallas and her Muses try the Poets in their Pamphlets, and Diana, if she bee to bee séene, is a grace to her fayrest Nymph: Time is now gracious in Nature, & Nature in time: the Ayre wholesome, and the earth pleasant, and the sea not uncomfortable: the Aged feele a kind of youth, & Youth, the Spirit ful of life: it is the messenger of many pleasures: the Courtiers progresse, and the Farmers profit: the Labourers Harvest, and the Beggers Pilgrimage. In summe, there is much good to be spoken of this time: but to avoyd tediousnes, I will thus conclude of it: I hold it in all that I can sée in it, the Jewell of time, and the Joy of Nature.

Farewell.

* Replexion : reflection.

SUMMER

*

It is now Summer, & Zephirus with his swéet breath cooles the parching beames of Titon, the leaves of the trées are in whisper talkes of the blessings of the aire, while the Nightingale is tuning her throat to refresh the weary spirit of the Travayler: Flora now brings out her Wardrop, and richly embroydreth her gréene Apron: the Nymphes of the Woodes in consort with the Muses sing an Ave to the Morning, and a Vale to the Sunnes setting: the Lambes and the Rabbettes run at base * in the sandy Warrens, and the Plow landes are covered with corne: the stately Hart is at Layre in the high wood, while the Hare in a furrow sits washing of her face: The Bull makes his walke like a Master of the field, and the broad-headed Oxe beares the Garland of the market: the Angler with a fly takes his pleasure with the fish, while the little Merline hath the Partridge in the foot: the Hony-dewes perfume the Ayre, and the Sunny-showers are the earths comfort: the Greyhound on the plaine makes the faire course: & the wel-mouthed Hound makes the Musicke of the woods: the Battaile of the field is now stoutly fought, and the proud Rye must stoupe to the Sickle: The Carters whistle chéeres his forehorse, and drinke and sweat is the life of the Labourer: Idle spirits are banished the limits of Honour, while the studious braine brings forth his wonder: the Azure Sky shewes the Heaven is gracious, and the

* Base : a popular game, generally known as Prisoner's Base or Bidding Base.

glorious Sunne glads the spirit of Nature: The ripened fruits shew the beauty of the earth, and the brightnesse of the aire the glory of the heavens: In summe, for the world of worth I find in it, I thus conclude of it: I hold it a most swéet season the variety of pleasures, and the Paradise of love.

Farewell.

HARVEST

*

It is now Harvest, and the Larke must lead her yong out of the nest: for the Sithe and the Sickle wil down with the grasse and the corne: Now are the hedges ful of Berries, & the highwayes full of Rogues, and the lazy Limmes must sléepe out their dinner: The Ant and the Bée work for their winter provision, and after a frost, the Grashopper is not séene: Butter, milke, and chéese, are the Labourers dyet, and a pot of good Béere, quickens his spirit. If there be no plague, the people are healthy for continuance of motion is a preservation of nature: The fresh of the morning, and the coole of the Evening are the times of Court walkes; but the poore traveller treads out the whole day: Malt is now above wheat with a number of mad people, and a fine shirt is better than a Frize Jerkin: Peares and Plummes now ripen apace, and being of a watry substance, are cause of much sicknesse: The pipe and the taber now follow the Fayres, and they that have any money, make a gaine of their markets. Bucks now are in season, and Partridges are Rowen-taild,* & a good Retriver is a Spaniell worth the keeping. In sum, it is a time of much worth, when, if God bee well pleased, the world will thrive the better. And to conclude, this is all that I will say of it; I hold it the Heavens Bounty, the Earths Beauty, and the Worlds Benefit.

Farewell.

* Rowen is a second crop of grass or corn. Rowen-tailed : short and thin.

WINTER

*

It is now Winter, and Boreas beginnes to fill his chéekes with breath, shaketh the tops of the high Cedars, and hoyseth * the waves of the Sea, to the danger of the Saylers comfort: Now is the Earth nipt at the heart with a cold, and her Trées are disrobed of their rich apparell: there is a glasse set upon the face of the Waters, and the Fishes are driven to the bottomes of the déepe: The Usurer now sits lapt in his furres, and the poore makes his breath, a fire to his fingers ends: Beautie is maskt for feare of the ayre, and youth runnes to Physicke for Restoratives of Nature: The Stagge roares for loss of his strength, and the Flea makes his Castle in the wooll of a blanket: Cards and Dice now begin their harvest, and good Ale and Sack are the cause of civill warres: Machiavil † and the Devill are in counsell upon destruction, and the wicked of the world make hast to hell: Money is such a Monopoly, that hee is not to be spoken of, and the delay of suits is the death of hope. In it selfe it is a wofull Season, the punishment of natures pride, and the play of misery.

Farewell.

* Hoyseth : hoist : to heave. † Machiavil : Machiavelli.

JANUARY

*

It is now January, and Time beginnes to turne the whéel of his Revolution, the Woods begin to lose the beauty of their spreading boughes, and the proud Oke must stoop to the Axe: the Squirell now surveyeth the Nut and the Maple, and the Hedgehogge rowles up himselfe like a football: an Apple and a Nutmeg make a Gossips cup: and the Ale and the Fagot are the Victuallers merchandise: the Northerne black Dust * is the during Fuell, and the fruit of the Grape heats the stomake of the Aged: Downe beds and quilted Cappes † are now in the pride of their service, and the Cooke and the Pantler ‡ are men of no meane office: the Oxe and the fat Weather now furnish the market, and the Coney is so ferreted, that she cannot keepe in her borough: the Currier § and the Lime-rod || are the death of the fowle, and the Faulcons bels ring the death of the mallard: the trotting gelding makes a way through the mire, and the Hare & the Hound put the Huntsman to his horne: the barren Doe subscribes to the dish, and the smallest séed makes sauce to the greatest flesh: the dryed grasse is the horses ordinary, and the meale of the beanes makes him goe through

* 'Northern black dust: sea-coal, coal brought by sea from the north of England.

† Cappes: coverlets.

‡ Pantler: servant in charge of the bread. See also 'Ten of the Clock,' p. 46.

§ Currier: quarrier, one who preys upon birds.

|| Lime-rod: a twig smeared with lime to catch birds.

with his travell: Fishermen now have a cold trade, and travellers a foule journey: the Cook room now is not the worst place in the Ship, and the Shepheard hath a bleake seat on the Mountaine: the Blackbird leaveth not a berry on the thorne, and the garden earth is turned up for her roots: the water floods runne over the proud bankes, and the gaping Oister leaves his shell in the streets, while the proud Peacocke leaps into the pye: Muscovia commodities are now much in request, and the water Spaniell is a necessary servant: the Lode horse to the mill hath his full backe burthen; and the Thresher in the barne tyres the strength of his flayle: the Woodcocke and the Pheasant pay their lives for their féed, and the Hare after a course makes his hearse in a pye: the shoulder of a hog is a shooing horne to good drink, and a cold almes makes a begger shrug. To conclude, I hold it a time of little comfort, the rich mans charge, and the poore mans misery.

Farewell.

FEBRUARY

*

It is now February, & the Sun is gotten up a Cocke-stride of his climbing, the Valleyes now are painted white, and the brookes are full of water: the Frog goes to séeke out the Paddocke, and the Crow and the Rooke begin to mislike their old Makes:* forward Connies begin now to kindle, & the fat grounds are not without Lambes: the Gardiner fals to sorting of his seeds, and the Husbandman falls afresh to scowring of his Ploughshare: the Terme travellers make the Shooe-makers Harvest, and the Chaundlers cheese makes the chalke walke apace:† The Fishmonger sorts his ware against Lent: and a Lambe-skinne is good for a lame arme: the waters now alter the nature of their softnes, and the soft earth is made stony hard: The Ayre is sharp and piercing, and the winds blow cold: the Tavernes and the Innes seldome lack Guests, & the Ostler knows how to gaine by his Hay: the hunting Horse is at the héeles of the Hound, while the ambling Nagge carrieth the Physitian and his footcloth: the blood of Youth begins to spring, and the honour of Art is gotten by Exercise: The trees a little begin to bud, and the sap begins to rise up out of the root: Physic now hath work among weak bodies, and the Apothecaries drugges are very gainfull: There is hope of a better time not farre off, for this in it selfe is little

* Makes: mates.

† Chalk walk apace: increases the score or debt marked with chalk on the back of the ale-house door.

comfortable: and for the small pleasure that I find in it, I will thus briefly conclude of it: It is the poor mans pick-purse, and the misers cut-throat, the enemy to pleasure, and the time of patience.

Farewell.

MARCH

*

It is now March, and the Northerne wind dryeth up the Southerne durt: The tender Lippes are now maskt for feare of chopping, and the faire hands must not be ungloved: now riseth the Sunne a pretty step to his faire height, and Saint Valentine calls the birds together, where Nature is pleased in the varietie of love: the Fishes and the Frogs fall to their manner of generation, and the Adder dyes to bring forth her young: the Ayre is sharpe, but the Sunne is comfortable, and the hay beginnes to lengthen: The forward Gardens give the fine Sallets, and a Nosegay of Violets is a present for a Lady: Now beginneth Nature (as it were) to wake out of her sleepe, and sends the Traveller to survey the walkes of the World: the sucking Rabbit is good for weake stomackes, and the dyet for the Rhume doth many a great Cure: The Farrier now is the horses Physitian, and the fat Dog feeds the Faulcon in the Mew: The Tree begins to bud, and the grasse to péepe abroad, while the Thrush with the Black-bird make a charme in the young Springs: the Milke-mayd with her best beloved, talke away wearinesse to the Market, and in an honest meaning, kind words doe no hurt: the Foot-ball now tryeth the legges of strength, and merry matches continue good fellowship: It is a time of much worke, and tedious to discourse of: but in all I find of it, I thus conclude in it: I hold it the Servant of Nature, and the Schoole-master of Art: the hope of labour, and the Subject of Reason.

Farewell.

APRILL

*

It is now April, and the Nightingale begins to tune her throat against May: the Sunny showers perfume the aire, and the Bées begin to goe abroad for honey: the Dewe, as in Pearles, hangs upon the tops of the grasse, while the Turtles sit billing upon the little gréene boughes: the Trowt begins to play in the Brookes, and the Sammon leaves the Sea, to play in the fresh waters: The Garden bankes are full of gay flowers, and the Thorne and the Plumme send forth their faire Blossomes: the March Colt begins to play, and the Cosset Lamb * is learned to butt. The Poets now make their studies in the woods, & the Youth of the Country make ready for the Morris-dance; the little Fishes lye nibling at a bait, and the Porpas playes in the pride of the tide: the Shepheards pipe entertaines the Princesse of Arcadia, and the healthfull Souldier hath a pleasant march. The Larke and the Lambe looke up at the Sun, and the labourer is abroad by the dawning of the day: Sheepes eyes in Lambs heads, tell kind hearts strange tales, while faith and troth make the true Lovers knot: the aged haires find a fresh life, and the youthfull chéeks are as red as a cherry: It were a world to set downe the worth of this moneth: But in summe, I thus conclude, I hold it the Heavens blessing, and the Earths comfort.

Farewell.

* Cosset lamb : a lamb reared by hand.

*

It is now May, and the swéetnesse of the Aire refresheth every spirit: the sunny beames bring forth faire Blossomes, and the dripping Clouds water Floraes great garden: the male Déere puts out the Velvet head, and the pagged * Doe is neere her fawning: The Sparhawke † now is drawne out of the mew, and the Fowler makes ready his whistle for the Quaile: the Larke sets the morning watch, and the evening the Nightingale: the Barges like Bowers, keep the streams of the swéet Rivers, and the Mackrell with the Shad are taken prisoners in the Sea: the tall young Oke is cut downe for the Maypole: the Sithe and the Sickle are the Mowers furniture, and fayre weather makes the Labourer merry: the Physitian now prescribes the cold Whey, and the Apothecary gathers the dew for a medecine: Butter & Sage make the wholsome breakfast, but fresh chéese and creame are meat for a dainty mouth: and the Strawbery and the Pescod want no price in the market: the Chicken and the Ducke are fatned for the market, and many a Goslin never lives to be a Goose. It is the moneth wherein Nature hath her full of mirth, and the Senses are filled with delights. I conclude, It is from the Heavens a Grace, & to the Earth a Gladnesse.

Farewell.

* Pagged : with young.
† Sparhawke : sparrow-hawk.

JUNE

*

It is now June and the Hay-makers are mustered to make an army for the field, where not alwayes in order, they march under the Bagge * and the Bottle, and betwixt the Forke and the Rake, there is séene great force of armes: Now doth the broad Oke comfort the weary Laborer, while under his shady Boughes he sits singing to his bread and cheese: the Hay-cocke is the Poore mans Lodging, and the fresh River is his gracious Neighbour: Now the Faulcon and the Tassell † try their wings at the Partridge, and the fat Bucke fils the great pasty: the trees are all in their rich aray: but the séely Shéep is turned out of his coat: the Roses and swéet Herbes put the Distiller to his cunning, while the gréene apples on the tree are ready for the great bellied wives: Now begins the Hare to gather up her héeles, and the Foxe lookes about him, for feare of the Hound: the Hooke and the Sickle are making ready for harvest: the Medow grounds gape for raine, and the Corne in the eare begins to harden: and little Lads make Pipes of the straw, and they that cannot dance, will yet bee hopping: the Ayre now groweth somewhat warme, and the Coole winds are very comfortable: the Sayler now makes merry passage, and the nimble Foot-man runnes with pleasure: In briefe, I thus conclude, I hold it a sweet season, the senses perfume and the spirits comfort.

Farewell.

* Bagge : wine-skin.

† Tassell : male hawking bird.

JULY

*

It is now July and the Sunne is gotten up to his height, whose heat parcheth the earth, and burnes up the grasse on the mountaines. Now begins the Canon of heaven to rattle, and when the fire is put to the charge, it breaketh out among the Cloudes: the stones of congealed water cut off the eares of the Corne: and the blacke stormes affright the faint-hearted: the Stag and the Bucke are now in pride of their time, and the hardnesse of their heads makes them fit for the Horner: Now hath the Sparhawke the Partridge in the foot and the Ferret doth tickle the Cony in the borough. Now doeth the Farmer make ready his teame, and the Carter with his whip, hath no small pride in his Whistle: Now doe the Reapers try their backs and their Armes, and the lusty Youthes pitch the sheafes into the Cart. The old Partridge calles her Covey in the morning, and in the evening, the Shepherd fals to folding of his flocke: the Sparrowes make a charme upon the gréene Bushes, till the Fowler come and take them by the dozens: the Smelt now begins to be in season, and the Lamprey out of the River leapes into a Pye: the Souldier now hath a hot march, and the Lawyer sweats in his lyned Gowne: the Pedler now makes a long walke, and the *Aqua vitae* Bottle sets his face on a fiery heat: In summe, I thus conclude of it, I hold it a profitable season, the Labourers gaine, and the rich mans wealth.

Farewell.

*

It is now August, and the Sunne is somewhat towards his declination, yet such is his heat as hardeneth the soft clay, dries up the standing ponds, wythereth the sappy leaves, and scorcheth the skin of the naked: now beginne the Gleaners to follow the Corne Cart, and a little bread to a great deale of drinke makes the Travailers dinner: the Melowne and the Cucumber is now in request: and Oyle and vineger give attendance on the Sallet hearbes: the Alehouse is more frequented then the Taverne, and a fresh River is more comfortable than a fiery Furnace: the Bathe is now much visited by diseased bodies, and in the fayre Rivers, swimming is a sweet exercise: the Bow and the Bowle picke many a purse, and the Cockes with their héeles spurne away many a mans wealth: The Pipe and the Taber is now lustily set on worke, and the Lad and the Lasse will have no lead on their heeles: the new Wheat makes the Gossips Cake, and the Bride Cup is carried above the heads of the whole Parish: the Furmenty * pot welcomes home the Harvest Cart, and the Garland of flowers crownes the Captaine of the Reapers. Oh, 'tis the merry time, wherein honest Neighbours make good chéere, and God is glorified in his blessings on the earth. In summe, for that I find, I thus conclude, I hold it the worlds welfare, and the earths Warming-pan.

Farewell.

* Furmenty : frumenty, hulled wheat boiled in milk and seasoned.

SEPTEMBER

*

It is now September, and the Sunne begins to fall much from his height, the meadowes are left bare, by the mouthes of hungry Cattell, and the Hogges are turned into the Corne fields: the windes begin to knocke the Apples heads together on the trées, and the fallings are gathered to fill the Pyes for the Houshold: the Saylers fall to worke to get afore the winde, and if they spy a storme, it puts them to prayer: the Souldier now begins to shrug at the weather, and the Campe dissolved, the Companies are put to Garison: the Lawyer now begins his Harvest, and the Client payes for words by waight: the Innes now begin to provide for ghests, and the night-eaters in the stable, pinch the Travailer in his bed: Paper, pen, and inke are much in request, and the quarter Sessions take order with the way-layers: Coales and wood make toward the Chimney, and Ale and Sacke are in account with good fellowes: the Butcher now knocks downe the great Béeves, and the Poulters feathers make toward the Upholster: Walflet Oysters are the Fish wives wealth, and Pippins fine are the Costermongers rich merchandise: the flayle and the fan fall to worke in the Barne, and the Corne market is full of the Bakers: the Porkets now are driven to the Woods, and the home-fed Pigges make porke for the market. In briefe, I thus conclude of it, I hold it the Winters forewarning, and the Summers farewell.

Adieu.

OCTOBER

*

It is now October, and the lofty windes make bare the trées of their leaves, while the hogs in the Woods grow fat with the falne Acorns: the forward Déere begin to goe to rut, and the barren Doe groweth good meat: the Basket-makers now gather their rods, and the fishers lay their leapes * in the déepe: the loade horses goe apace to the Mill, and the Meal-market is seldome without people: the Hare on the hill makes the Greyhound a faire course, & the Foxe in the woods cals the Hounds to a full cry: the multitude of people raiseth the price of wares, and the smoothe tongue will sell much: the Sayler now bestirreth his stumps, while the Merchant liveth in feare of the weather: the great feasts are now at hand for the City, but the poore must not beg for feare of the stockes: a fire and a paire of Cards kéepe the ghests in the Ordinary, and Tobacco is held very precious for the Rhewme: The Coaches now begin to rattle in the street but the cry of the poore is unpleasing to the rich: Muffes and Cuffes are now in request, and the shuttel-Cocke with the Battel-doore is a pretty house-exercise: Tennis & Baloune † are sports of some charge, and a quicke bandy ‡ is the Court-keepers commodity: dancing and fencing are now in some use, and kind hearts and true Lovers lye

* Leape: weel; a trap for fish made of twigs.

† Baloune: a balloon game.

‡ Bandy: a game played with a club bent at the end for striking a ball like hockey.

close, to kéepe off cold: the Titmouse now kéepes in the hollow tree, and the black bird sits close in the bottome of a hedge: In briefe, for the little pleasure I find in it, I thus conclude of it: I hold it a Messenger of ill newes, and a second service to a cold dinner.

Farewell.

NOVEMBER

*

It is now November, and according to the old Proverbe Let the Thresher take his flayle, And the ship no more sayle: for the high winds and the rough seas will try the ribs of the Shippe, and the hearts of the Sailers: Now come the Countrey people all wet to the Market, and the toyling Carriers are pittifully moyled:* The yonge Herne † and the Shoulerd ‡ are now fat for the great Feast, and the Woodcocke begins to make toward the Cockeshoot:§ The Warriners now beginne to plie their harvest, and the Butcher, after a good bargaine drinks a health to the Grasier: the Cooke and the Comfitmaker, make ready for Christmas, and the Minstrels in the Countrey, beat their boyes for false fingring: Schollers before breakefast have a cold stomacke to their bookes, and a Master without Art is fit for an A.B.C. A red herring and a cup of Sacke, make warre in a weake stomacke, and the poore mans fast, is better then the Gluttons surfet: Trenchers and dishes are now necessary servants, and a locke to the Cubboord kéepes a bit for a néede: Now beginnes the Goshauke || to wéede the wood of the Phesant and the Mallard loves not to heare the belles of the Faulcon: The winds now are cold, and the Ayre chill, and the

* Moyled : daubed with dirt.
† Herne : heron.
‡ Shoulerd : shoveller, a species of duck.
§ Cockeshoot : a net to catch woodcocke.
|| Goshauke : a hawk of a large kind.

poore die through want of Charitie: Butter and Chéese beginne to rayse their prices, and Kitchen stuffe is a commoditie, that every man is not acquainted with. In summe, with a conceit of the chilling cold of it, I thus conclude in it: I hold it the discomfort of Nature, and Reasons patience.

Farewell.

*

It is now December, and hée that walkes the stréets, shall find durt on his shooes, Except hée goe all in bootes: Now doth the Lawyer make an end of his harvest, and the Client of his purse: Now Capons and Hennes, beside Turkies, Géese and Duckes, besides Béefe and Mutton, must all die for the great feast, for in twelve dayes a multitude of people will not bée fed with a little: Now plummes and spice, Sugar and Honey, square it among pies and broth, and Gossip I drinke to you, and you are welcome, and I thanke you, and how doe you, and I pray you bée merrie: Now are the Taylors and the Tiremakers full of worke against the Holidayes, and Musicke now must bée in tune, or else never: the youth must dance and sing, and the aged sit by the fire. It is the Law of Nature, and no Contradiction in reason: The Asse that hath borne all the yeare, must now take a little rest, and the leane Oxe must féed till hée bée fat: the Footman now shall have many a foule step, and the Ostler shall have worke enough about the héeles of the Horses, while the Tapster, if hée take not héed, will lie drunke in the Seller: The prices of meat will rise apace, and the apparell of the proud will make the Taylor rich: Dice and Cardes, will benefit the Butler: And if the Cooke doe not lacke wit, hée will swéetly licke his fingers: Starchers and Launderers will have their hands full of worke, and Periwigs and painting will not bee a little set by, strange stuffes will bée well sold, strange

tales well told, strange sights much sought, strange things much bought, And what else as fals out. To conclude, I hold it the costly Purveyour of Excesse, and the after breeder of necessitie, the practice of Folly, and the Purgatory of Reason.

Farewell.

CHRISTMAS DAY

*

It is now Christmas, and not a Cup of drinke must passe without a Caroll, the Beasts, Fowle and Fish, come to a generall execution, and the Corne is ground to dust for the Bakehouse, and the Pastry: Cards and Dice purge many a purse, and the Youth shew their agility in shooing of the wild Mare*: now good chéere and welcome, and God be with you, and I thanke you: and against the new yeere, provide for the presents: the Lord of Mis-rule is no meane man for his time, and the ghests of the high Table must lacke no Wine: the lusty bloods must looke about them like men, and piping and dauncing puts away much melancholy: stolne Venison is sweet, and a fat Coney is worth money: Pit-falles are now set for small Birdes, and a Woodcocke hangs himselfe in a gynne: a good fire heats all the house, and a full Almes-basket makes the Beggers Prayers: the Maskers and Mummers make the merry sport: but if they lose their money, their Drumme goes dead: Swearers and Swaggerers are sent away to the Ale-house, and unruly Wenches goe in danger of Judgement: Musicians now make their Instruments speake out, and a good song is worth the hearing. In summe, it is a holy time, a duty in Christians, for the remembrance of Christ, and custome among friends, for the maintenance of good fellowship: In briefe, I thus conclude of it: I hold it a memory of the Heavens Love, and the worlds peace, the myrth of the honest, and the meeting of the friendly. *Farewell.*

*Shoeing the wild mare: to exact a fine called footing from a new comer, a colt or green-horn.

LENT

*

It is now Lent, and the poore Stockfish* is sore beaten for his stubbornesse: the Herring dominiers like a Lord of great Service, and the fruit of the Dairy makes a hungry Feast: Fasting and mourning is the life of the poore, and the Dogges grow leane, with the lacke of bones, while the Prisoners heart is nipt with penury: the Beasts of the Forests have a bare féed, and the hard crusts try the téeth of the Begger: The Byrd hath a little shelter in the Bush, and a bitter frost makes a backward Spring: The Sunne gives but little warmth, and the March wind makes the Ayre cold: The Fishermen now are the Rakers of the Sea, and the Oyster gapes, to catch hold of the Crab: Solitarinesse and Melancholy bréed the hurt of Nature, and the nakednesse of the Earth is the eyes discomfort: Idle people sit picking of Sallets, and necessity of exercise is an enemy to study: the winds grow dangerous to the Sayler and the Rockes are the ruine of the Merchant: the Sentinell now keeps a cold watch, and the Sconce† is nothing comfortable to the Souldier: the Shepheard hath little pleasure in his Pipe, and Age hath but a dead feeling in love: the Colt hath a ragged coat, and the halfe mewed‡ head disgraceth the Déere: the Faulcons wing is but young feathered, and the deepe fallow wearies the Huntsman: There is nothing pleasing

* Stockfish : salt or dried fish.

† Sconce : a small fort.

‡ Mewed : moulting.

but hope, that the dayes will lengthen and time will be more comfortable. I conclude, in it selfe, it is an uncomfortable season, the Heavens frown, and the Earths punishment.

Farewell.

GOOD FRIDAY

*

It is now Good Friday, and a general Fast must be kept among all Christians, in remembrance of Christs Passion: Flesh and Fish must bee vanished all stomackes, strong or weake: Now beginnes the Farewell to thin fare, and the Fishmongers may shut up their shops till the Holy-dayes be past: the Butchers now must wash their Boords, make cleane their Aprons, sharpen their knives, and sort their prickers,* and cut out their meat for Easter Eve market: Now must the Poulters make ready their Rabbets and their Fowle, the Cookes have their Ovens cleane, and all for Pies and Tarts against the merry Feast: Now the Maids bestir them about their houses, the Launders about their Linen, the Taylors about Apparell, and all for this holy time: Now young Lambs, young Rabbets and young Chickens dye for fine appetites, and now the Minstrell tunes his Instruments, to have them ready for the young people: but with the aged and the religious, there is nothing but sorrow and mourning, confession, contrition, and absolution, and I know not what: few that are merry, but children that breake up schoole, and wenches that are upon the mariage. In summe, it is such an odde day by it selfe, that I will onely make this conclusion of it: It is the Bridle of Nature, and the Examiner of Reason.

Farewell.

* Prickers : skewers.

EASTER DAY

*

It is now Easter, and Jacke of Lent * is turned out of doores: the Fishermen now hang up their nets to dry, while the Calfe and the Lambe walke toward the Kitchin and the Pastry: the velvet heads of the Forrests fall at the loose of the Crosse-bow: the Samman Trowt playes with the Fly, and the March Rabbit runnes dead into the dish: the Indian Commodities pay the Merchants adventure: and Barbary Sugar puts Honey out of countenance: the holy feast is kept for the faithfull, and a knowne Jew hath no place among Christians: the Earth now beginnes to paint her upper garment, and the trees put out their young buds, the little Kids chew their Cuds, and the Swallow féeds on the Flyes in the Ayre: the Storke clenseth the Brookes of the Frogges, and the Sparhawke prepares her wing for the Partridge: the little Fawne is stolne from the Doe, and the male Déere beginne to heard: the spirit of Youth is inclined to mirth, and the conscionable Scholler will not breake a holy-day: the Minstrell cals the Maid from her dinner, and the Lovers eyes doe troule† like Tennis balls. There is mirth and joy, when there is health and liberty; and he that hath money, will be no meane man in his mansion: the Ayre is wholsome, and the Skye comfortable, the Flowers odoriferous, and the Fruits pleasant: I conclude, it is a day of much delightfulnesse: the Sunnes dancing day, and the Earths Holy-day. *Farewell.*

*'Jack of Lent': a kind of puppet thrown at during Lent.

†Troule: roll.

*

It is now Morning, and Time hath woond up the Whéeles of his day Watch, while the Larke, the Sunnes Trumpet, calls the Labourer to his worke: there is joy and comfort through the whole world, that the spirits of life are awaked out of their dead sléepe: It is the blessed time of reason, in which the best things are begunne, while Nature goes to experience for the better perfection of her businesse: The Sunne now beginnes to draw open the Curtaine of his Pavilion, and with the heat of his Beames drawes up the unwholesome mists in the Ayre: the Mother Earth is recovered of her cold sicknesse, and sends forth her fayre flowers to perfume the infected ayre: now the Sorceresse with her magicke Art puts her charmes to silence, and the Birds of the woods make musicke to the poore traveller. Now begin the wits of the wise, and the limbes of strength to compasse the world, and make Art honourable: Theeves now are either caved or imprisoned, and knowledge of comfort puts care to a *Non plus*. The beasts of the forrests use the silence of feare, and the Wolfe like a Dog dares not looke out of his denne: the Wormes into the earth, and the Toades into the Waters, flye for fear of their heads: This is a time that I ioy in, for I think no time lost, but in sléepe: and now have imaginations their best meanes to attire themselves in the golden liverie of their best graces; to which the night is at no time by deprivation of action. I conclude, it is in it selfe a blessed season, a dispersing of the first darknesse, and the Diall of Alexander.

Farewell.

*

It is now the third houre, and the Windowes of Heaven beginne to open, and the Sunne beginnes to colour the Clouds in the Sky, before he shew his face to the World: Now are the spirits of life, as it were, risen out of death: the Cocke cals the servants to their dayes work, and the grasse horses are fetcht from the Pastures: the Milke-maids begin to looke toward their dayry, and the good Huswife beginnes to looke about the house: the Porrage pot is on for the servants breakfast, and hungry stomackes will soone bee ready for their victuall: the Sparrow beginnes to chirpe about the house, and the Birds in the bushes will bid them welcome to the field: the Shepheard sets on his Pitch on the fire, and fills his Tar-pot ready for his flocke: the Whéele and the Réele beginne to be set ready, and a merry song makes the worke séeme easie: the Plough-man falls to harnesse his horses, and the Thrasher beginnes to looke toward the barne: the Scholler that loves learning, will be hard at his Booke, and the Labourer by great,* will be walking toward his worke. In briefe, it is a parcell of time, to good purpose, the exercise of Nature, and the entrance into Art.

Farewell.

*'Labourer by great': one who is paid for piece-work, not a daily wage.

*

It is now the second houre, and the point of the Diall hath stept over the first stroake, and now Time beginnes to draw backe the Curtaine of the night: the Cocke again cals to his Henne, and the Watch beginne to bussle toward their discharge: the Bell-man hath made a great part of his walke, and the Nurse beginnes to huggle the child to the Dugge: the Cat sits playing with the Mouse which she hath catched, and the Dog with his barking wakes the servants of the house: the studious now are neare upon waking, and the théefe will be gone, for feare of being taken: The Forresters now be about their walkes, and yet stealers sometime cozen the Kéepers: Warreners now beginne to draw homeward, and far dwellers from the towne, will be on the way to the market; The Souldier now lookes towards the Court de Garde, and the Corporall takes care for the reliefe of the Watch: the earnest Scholler will be now at his booke, and the thrifty Husbandman will rowse towards his rising: the Seaman will now looke out for light, and if the wind be faire, hee cals for a Can of Béere: the fishermen now take the benefit of the tyde, and he that bobs for Eeles, will not be without Worms. In summe, I hold it much of the nature of the first houre, but somewhat better. And to conclude, I thinke it the enemy of Sleepe, and the entrance to Exercise.

Farewell.

*

It is now the third houre, and the Windowes of Heaven beginne to open, and the Sunne beginnes to colour the Clouds in the Sky, before he shew his face to the World: Now are the spirits of life, as it were, risen out of death: the Cocke cals the servants to their dayes work, and the grasse horses are fetcht from the Pastures: the Milke-maids begin to looke toward their dayry, and the good Huswife beginnes to looke about the house: the Porrage pot is on for the servants breakfast, and hungry stomackes will soone bee ready for their victuall: the Sparrow beginnes to chirpe about the house, and the Birds in the bushes will bid them welcome to the field: the Shepheard sets on his Pitch on the fire, and fills his Tar-pot ready for his flocke: the Whéele and the Réele beginne to be set ready, and a merry song makes the worke séeme easie: the Plough-man falls to harnesse his horses, and the Thrasher beginnes to looke toward the barne: the Scholler that loves learning, will be hard at his Booke, and the Labourer by great,* will be walking toward his worke. In briefe, it is a parcell of time, to good purpose, the exercise of Nature, and the entrance into Art.

Farewell.

*'Labourer by great': one who is paid for piece-work, not a daily wage.

*

It is now the fourth houre, and the Sunne beginnes to send her beames abroad, whose glimmering brightnesse no eye can behold: Now crowes the Cocke lustily, and claps his wings for joy of the light, and with his Hennes leaps lightly from his Roust: Now are the Horses at their Chaffe and Provender: the servants at breakfast, the Milk-maid gone to the field, and the Spinner at the Wheele: and the Shepheard with his Dog are going toward the Fold: Now the Beggers rouse them out of the Hedges, and begin their morning craft; but if the Constable come, beware the stocks: The Birds now beginne to flocke, and the Sparhawke beginnes to prey for his Ayry*: The Thresher beginnes to stretch his long armes, and the thriving Labourer will fall hard to his worke: the quicke witted braine will be quoting of places, and the cunning, work-man will bee trying of his skill: the Hounds begin to bee coupled for the chase, and the Spaniels follow the Faulconer to the field: Travellers beginne to looke toward the Stable, where an honest Hostler is worthy his reward: the Souldier now is upon discharge of his Watch, and the Captaine with his company may take as good rest as they can: In summe, I thus conclude of it: I hold it the Messenger of Action and the Watch of Reason.

Farewell.

*Ayry: eyre or nest.

*

It is now five of the Clocke, and the Sunne is going apace upon his journey: and fie sluggards, who would be asleepe: the Bels ring to Prayer, and the streets are full of people, and the high-wayes are stored with Travellers: the Schollers are up and going to schoole, and the Rods are ready for the Truants correction: the Maids are at milking, and the servants at Plough, and the Wheele goes merrily, while the Mistresse is by: the Capons and the Chickens must bee served without doore, and the Hogges cry till they have their swill: the Shepheard is almost gotten to his Fold, and the Heard beginnes to blow his horne through the Towne. The blind Fidler is up with his dance and his song, and the Alehouse doore is unlocked for good fellowes: the hounds begin to find after the Hare, and horse and foot follow after the cry: the Traveller now is well on his way, and if the weather be faire, he walkes with the better chéere: the Carter merrily whistles to his horse, and the Boy with his Sling casts stones at the Crowes: the Lawyer now begins to look on his Case, and if he give good counsel, he is worthy of his Fee: In briefe, not to stay too long upon it, I hold it the necessity of Labour, and the note of Profit.

Farewell.

SIXE OF THE CLOCKE

*

It is now the sixth houre, the sweet time of the Morning, and the Sunne at every window calls the Sléepers from their beds: the Marygold beginnes to open her leaves, & the Dew on the ground doth swéeten the Ayre: the Faulconers now méet with many a faire flight, and the Hare and the Hounds have made the Huntsman good sport: the shoppes in the City begin to shew their wares, and the market people have taken their places. The Schollers now have their Fourmes, and whosoever cannot say his Lesson, must presently looke for Absolution: The Forester now is drawing home to his Lodge, and if his Déere be gone, hée may draw after cold scent: Now begins the curst Mistresse to put her Girles to their taskes, and a lazy Hylding* will doe hurt among good Workers: Now the Mower falles to whetting of his Sythe, and the Beaters of Hempe give a hoh to every blow: The Ale Knight is at his Cup ere hée can well sée his drinke, and the begger is as nimble toung'd, as if he had beene at it all day: the Fishermen now are at the Craier† for their Oysters, and they will never lyn‡ crying, while they have one in their basket: In summe, not to be tedious, I hold it, the Sluggards shame, and the Labourers praise.

Farewell.

*Hylding : hinder-ling, base wretch.
†Craier : crier. ‡Lyn : cease.

*

It is now the seventh houre, and Time begins to set the world hard to worke: The Milke-maides in their Dayry to their Butter and their Chéese, the Ploughmen to their Ploughes and their Harrowes in the field: the Schollers to their Lessons, the Lawyers to their Cases, the Merchants to their accounts, the Shop-men to What lacke you? and every Trade to his businesse: Oh tis a world to sée how life leapes about the lims of the healthfull; none but findes something to doe: the Wise, to study, the strong, to labour: the Fantasticke, to make love: the Poet, to make Verses: the Player, to conne his part: and the Musitian to try his note: every one in his qualitie, and according to his condition, sets himself to some exercise, either of the body, or the minde: And therefore since it is a time of much labour, and great use, I will thus briefly conclude of it: I hold it the enemy of Idlenesse, and imployer of Industry.

Farewell.

*

It is now the eighth houre, and good stomackes are ready for a breakfast: The Huntsman now calls in his Houndes, and at the fall of the Deere the Hornes goe apace: Now beginne the Horses to breathe, and the Labourer to sweat, and with quicke hands, worke rids apace: Now the Schollers make a charme in the Schooles and Ergo kéepes a stirre in many a false Argument: Now the Chapmen fall to furnish the shoppes, the market people make away with their ware: The Taverne hunters taste of the tother Wine, and the nappy* Ale makes many a drunken Noll†: Now the Thrasher beginnes to fall to his breakfast, and eate apace, and worke apace, riddes the Corne quickly away: Now the Piper lookes what hée hath gotten since day, and the Begger if hée have hit well, will have a pot of the best: The Traveller now begins to water his horse, and if he were earley up, perhaps a bait will doe well. The Osteler now makes cleane his stables, and if Ghestes come in, hée is not without his welcome. In conclusion, for all I finde in it, I hold it the Mindes travaile, and the Bodies toyle.

Farewell.

*Nappy : strong or heady.

†Noll : the top of the head, the noddle. A simpleton, or dull drunken person. Compare Harrison's *Description of England*, 'He carrieth off a drie dronken noll to bed with him.'

*

It is now the nynth houre, and the Sunne is gotten up well toward his height, and the sweating Traveller beginnes to féele the burthen of his way: The Scholler now falles to conning of his Lesson, and the Lawyer at the Barre falls to pleading of his Case: the Soldier now makes many a weary steppe in his march, and the amorous Courtier is almost ready to goe out of his Chamber: The market now growes to bée full of people, and the Shopmen now are in the heat of the market: the Faulconers now finde it too hote flying, and the Huntsmen begin to grow weary of their sport: The Byrders now take in their Nets and their Roddes, and the Fishermen send their Fish to the Market: The Taverne and the Ale-house are almost full of Guestes, and Westminster and Guild Hall are not without a word or two on both sides: The Carriers now are loading out of Towne, and not a Letter but must bée payd for ere it passe: The Cryer now tryes the strength of his throat, and the Beareward* leades his Beare home after his challenge: The Players Billes are almost all set up, and the Clarke of the Market begins to shew his Office: In summe, in this houre there is much to doe, as well in the City, as the Countrey: And therefore to be short, I will thus make my conclusion: I hold it the toyle of Wit, and the tryall of Reason.

Farewell.

*Beareward: a keeper of bears.

*

It is now the tenth houre, and now preparation is to bée made for dinner: The Trenchers must be scraped, and the Napkins folded, the Salt covered, and the Knives scoured, and the cloth layed, the Stooles set ready, and all for the Table: there must be haste in the Kitchin for the Boyld and the Roste, provision in the sellar for Wyne, Ale, and Béere: The Pantler and the Butler must bée ready in their Office, and the Usher of the Hall must marshall the Serving men: The Hawke must bée set on the Pearch, and the Dogges put into the Kennell, and the Guests that come to Dinner, must bée invited against the houre: The Schollers now fall to construe and parce, and the Lawyer makes his Clyent either a Man or a Mouse: The Chapmen now draw home to their Innes, and the Shopmen fall to folding up their Wares: The Ploughman now beginnes to grow towards home, and the Dayry mayd, after her worke, falls to cleansing of her Vessels: The Cooke is cutting soppes for Broth, and the Butler is chipping of loaves for the Table: The Minstrels beginne to goe towards the Tavernes, and the Cursed Crue visit the vyle places: In summe, I thus conclude of it: I hold it the Messenger to the stomacke, and the spirits recreation.

Farewell.

ELEVEN OF THE CLOCKE

*

It is now the eleventh houre, children must breake up Schoole, Lawyers must make home to their houses, Merchants to the Exchange, and Gallants to the Ordinary: The Dishes set ready for the meat, and the Glasses halfe full of faire water: Now the market people make towards their Horses, and the Beggers begin to draw néere the Townes: the Porrage put off the fire, is set a cooling for the Plough folke, and the great Loafe and the Chéese are set ready on the Table: Colledges and Halles ring to Dinner, and a Schollers Commons is soone disgested: The Rich mans Guests are at Courtsey, and I thanke you: and the poore mans Feast is Welcome, and God be with you: The Page is ready with his Knife and his Trencher, and the meat will bée halfe cold, ere the Guests can agrée on their places: The Cooke voides the Kitchin, and the Butler, the Buttery, and the Serving men stand all ready at the Dresser: the Children are called to say Grace before Dinner, and nice people rather looke then eate: the gates be lockt for feare of the Beggers, and the Minstrels called in, to bée ready with their Musicke: The pleasant wit is now breaking a Jest, and the hungry man puts his Jawes to their proofe: In summe, to conclude my opinion of it, I hold it the Epicures Joy, and the Labourers ease.

Farewell.

*

It is now the twelfth Houre, the Sunne is at his height, and the middle of the day, the first course is served in, and the second ready to follow: the dishes have been red over,* and the revertion set by: the wine beginnes to be called for, and who waits not is chidden: talke passeth away time, and when stomackes are full, discourses grow dull and heavy: But after Fruit and Cheese, say Grace and take away: Now the Markets are done, the Exchange broke up, and the Lawyers at Dinner, and Duke Humphreys servants make their walkes in Paules†: the Shop men keepe their shops, and their servants goe to dinner: the traveller begins to call for a reckoning, and goes into the stable to see his Horse eate his provender: The Plough man now is in the bottom of his Dish, and the Laborer drawes out his Dinner out of his Bagge: The Beasts of the field take rest after their feed, and the Birds of the Ayre are at Juke‡ in the Bushes: The Lambe lies sucking, while the Ewe chewes the Cud, and the Rabbet will scarce péepe out of her Borough: the Hare sits close asléepe in her muse,§

*'Red over': put in order.

†A catch phrase of the day, *i.e.* to have no dinner to go to. Compare Hutton's *Satyres and Epigrams*: 'Dine with Duke Humfrey in decayed Paules,' and Mayne's *City Match*: 'Your penurius father, who was wont to walk his dinner out in Pauls . . . yes he was there as constant as Duke Humphrey.'

‡'At juke': roosting, from jugging, the sound made by the partridge before settling down to sleep.

§Muse: gap in a fence or thicket.

while the Dogges sit waiting for a bone from the Trencher: In briefe, for all I find of it, I thus conclude in it: I hold it the stomacks pleasure and the spirits wearines.

Farewell.

MIDNIGHT

*

Now is the Sunne withdrawne into his Bedchamber, the Windowes of Heaven are shut up, and silence with darknesse have made a walke over the whole Earth and Time is tasked to worke upon the worst Actions: yet Vertue being her selfe, is never weary of well doing, while the best spirits are studying for the bodies rest: Dreames and Visions are the Haunters of troubled spirits, while Nature is most comforted in the hope of the morning: the body now lyes as a dead lump, while sleepe, the pride of ease, lulls the Senses of the Sloathfull, the tired Limbs now cease from their labours, and the studious braines give over their businesse: the Bed is now an image of the Grave, and the Prayer of the Faithful makes the Pathway to Heaven: Lovers now enclose a mutuall content, while gracious minds have no wicked imaginations: Théeves, Wolves and Foxes, now fall to their pray, but, a strong locke, and a good wit, will aware much mischiefe: and he that trusteth in God will be safe from the Devill.

Farewell.

THE CONCLUSION

*

And thus to conclude, for that it growes late, and a nod or two with an heavy eye, makes me feare to prove a plaine Noddy,* entreating your patience till to morrow, and hoping you will censure mildly of this my Fantasticke Labour, wishing I may hereafter please your senses with a better subject then this; I will in the meane time pray for your prosperity, and end with the English Phrase, God give you good night.

Finis.

* The same as noll, a simpleton, or dull drunken person.

WITS TRENCHMOUR

IN A
CONFERENCE HAD BETWIXT
A SCHOLLER AND AN ANGLER

To the right Worshipfull and noble minded, the favorer of learning and nourisher of vertue, William Harbert *of the* Red Castle *in* Mountgombry-shiere, *Esquire, the highest power of the heavens give the happinesse of much honour.*

THE humble service that in bounden dutie I doe owe unto your honourable house, with the true report that I have often hearde of the noblenesse of your owne spirit, as well in regard of the learned, as favourer of the vertuous, hath made me presume to adventure the pardon of your discretion, in offering to your patience a president of so simple a wit, as dauncing a Trenchmour* in the shadow of understanding, dares not come into the light without the comfort of your good countenaunce: to make a large gate to a little Towne, were but a mockerie to a travailer, & no praise to the builder: therefore referring to your good leysure the reading of a mad discourse, and to the happines of your good favour the commandement of my better service, I take my leave in all humblenes,

Your Worships ready to commaund,

NICH. BRETON.

*Trenchmour: a lively and very popular dance. (See Introduction.)

To the Reader

He that will thinke in writing to please all humors, must have more varietie of invention then one wit can hit on; for my selfe, I would be glad to please the best spirits; for other, I wish them more perfection of understanding then lavishnesse of speech, and my selfe but the happines to bee out of the censure of the unwise, which sith I cannot be, putting my labours to the viewe of the worlde, where all minds are not of one mould, nor all spirits of a like vertue, I will hope well of the best, and keep patience for the other; and so loth to make a long entry to a little house, I will leave to your leysures to reade, & your curtesies to like, of such matter as you shall find handled, betwixt an Angler and a Scholler; how their talke came to light, & what you may gather of their discourse. And so in hast, from my lodging, I rest for this time, and alwayes as I find cause :

Your loving friend,

N. B.

THE ANGLERS CONFERENCE WITH THE SCHOLLER

*

AMONG the walkes of the wearie, where libertie and ayre, are the best comforts of the forlorne spirits of the world, it was the hap of a poore Scholler, (who feeding his imagination with the perswations of contemplation, making his passage downe a falling peece of ground, some-what neere unto a little hill, fast by a river side, whose streames seemed to slide along the banks of a lower platforme), to espy a humaine creature, standing upright and holding out his arme over the water, whom approching unto some-what neere, and finding to be an Angler, he saluted in this manner: True figure of patience, no offence to your conceit, howe might it fare with your colde exercise? The Fisherman (as it might appeare by his answer) beeing better trained in the varietie of understanding then could be contained within the compasse of a casting Nette, upon the suddaine made him this replie:

Shadow of intelligence,
To stay your further eloquence

when fooles gape for flyes, madde men may goe a fishing.

Oh Sir, (quoth the Scholler) I pray you enter not into choller, with him that meant not to trouble your better humour: but rather doe mee the favor to instruct mee in the reason, that might leade you into thys looking labour, then to take me up for halting ere I

come at my journeys ende: I promise you I was halfe afraide, that Ovids tales would have fallne out true, and that Narcissus, or some of his kindred, had been so in love with theyr owne shadowe, that hee could not goe from the River side: but coming neere, and finding the deceit of my imagination, confessing my folly, I am to crave your kindnes in a little conference, touching the profit of this colde pleasure, and what may be the fish that you angle for with a flie.

Sir, quoth the fisherman, to turne wit into choller, is such a peece of new Alkamie, as I never found written in the true rules of Philosophy: and to tell truth, as I remember when I went to the schoole of understanding, I found thys a sentence of discretion: It is but a trifling of wit, to bee troubling of humors: but sith you crave a favorable instruction in a matter of small importance, being perswaded that your hast is not great, nor affaires waightie, if you will sit downe and beare mee company, wee will feede the ayre with a little breath.

My good friend, quoth the Scholler, (for so I would be glad to finde you) to confesse a truth, neither is my hast such, but I may stay well, if not too long to your liking, neither my affaires of such import, but that I may put them of for a time, to enjoy the benefite of your good companie. Then sir quoth the Fisherman, let me tell you, I sit heere as you see angling for a fish, and my baite a flie: for little fishes as Bleakes, Roches, and such like, a flie will serve the turne: but for greater fishes, wee must find out greater baits: and with these flies wee catch such small frie, as serve to baite our hookes

for greater fishes. Now, if you can apply this figure to a good sence, I will hold you for a good scholler in ciphering.

I cannot tell (quoth the Scholler) howe you woulde I should interprete it, but this I conceive of it, that a childe may be wonne with an apple, when a Costermonger will not be pleased without a whole Orchard.

I perceive quoth the Angler, you are of Adams race, you thinke so much upon the apple, that poysoned him and all his posteritie, but if one should examine your conscience, doe you not meane the golden apple? Which, quoth the scholler? that which was offered to Juno, Pallas, and Venus? I thinke it to bee but a meere jest, for surely in these daies, and in such Countries as I have passed my travaile in, I never saw any creatures so angelicall, but they had spirits so terrestriall, that if a golden apple should be offered, it would be catcht ere it could bee thought of: and therefore I pray you satisfie your selfe with this aunswer to your first figure, and so to other, as it will fall out. The Angler holding himselfe contented with this construction of his conceit, followed on with his speech in this manner. Some fishes there are that keepe altogether in the deepe, & they we must angle for with a worme: now to this worme we must have a line of haire, as neere as we can of such a colour, as may best please the eye of fish to play with. Now to this line wee must have a plummet, which must guide the baite to the bottom, which drawing now and then up and downe, at length so pleaseth the fish, as ventring uppon the baite, aunswers

the hope of our labour. Now what thinke you of this figure? Trulie, Sir, quoth the Scholler, I thinke that when wit is ledde away with humors, reason may be intangled in repentance, and the pleasing of the eye, is such a plague to the hart, that the worme of conscience, brings ignorance to destruction, while in the Sea of iniquities, the devill angleth for his dinner.

The Fisherman smiling at this aunswere, fell to him with another peece of angling, in this manner. We have quoth hee, a kinde of flye made onely of silke, which we make our baite for a fish called a Trowt, with which we often deceive the foolish thing, as well as with the flie it selfe. Alas sir quoth the scholler, this shewes but the vile course of the world, where wit finding out a foole, feedes his fancie with such illusions, as makes him sometime loose himselfe, with looking after a shadow: as wordes are without substance, when they are layd for easie beleevers.

Well sir, quoth the Angler, sith you rove so neere the marke of an unhappy meaning: I will not yet trouble you with further desciphering of conceits, but onely tell you a little cause of my pleasure taken in this cold exercise. Before I had leysure to learne this lesson of patience, to sit on a banke side, and onely pleasing my conceit with the hope of my cunning, to deceive a silly creature of her comfort, I saw divers kinds of fishing in the world, which though they were easily learned, yet I had no minde to look into, at least for mine owne use, howsoever it profited other: but of these were divers sundry sorts, and of divers natures,

according to the Fishermen, or the fish that they baited for: of which kinds, according to the permission of time, I will acquaint you with a few, which I have learned to forget, as unpleasing to put in practise. One kind was substantiall, another metaphoricall, and the third fantasticall. The substantiall was fishing with the golden hooke, which rich men onely layde in the deepe consciences of the covetous, where they plucked up such favours as brought them a world of commoditie: and yet I remember one more welthie then wise, having made a hooke of a great waight, which was swallowed by a wide mouth, the great fish puld the no little foole into the water, and eyther drowned him in the deepe, or so swallowed him up quick, that he was never seene after in the world.

Alas sir quoth the Scholler, this fellow was eyther too greedy of his gaine, or perswaded himselfe to be another Jonas that after three dayes hee shoulde bee cast out of the Whales belly, and come to shore with a Muscle boat: but he was pittifully deceived: for by all that I can gesse of him, he had but one sillable of his name, and that was the last for he proved himselfe but an Asse, howsoever Jone fedde his humor. Alas sir quoth the Angler, there are many such misfortunes in the world, a man may swallowe a Gudgin, whilst he is fishing for a Pickrell, and leape a Whiting, whilst he is looking on a Codshead. Yea, quoth the Scholler, but that is foule play, that a man should loose his stoole, while he is looking for a cushion, and be robd of his bread whilst he is reaching for butter. Indeed qd the

Angler you say true, when one sits by ill neighbours, hee had need looke to his skirts. But leaving, these Items, let mee come to my first reckoning: fishing for the great fish I tell you, was wont to be with the golden hooke. Let the Mermaids sing never so sweetly, they make no reckoning of theyr musicke, it is the golden hooke that they will onelie come unto, and without that, it is but vaine to lay for a fish and catch a Frog. Why, I have heard of fishes that have been made drunke with a golden kinde of gum, that after they have but tasted it in theyr mouthes, they have turned up their bellies. Now for such great fishes as I speake of, the very oyle of gold is of such vertue, as the quintescence of halfe a million, will so overcome the sences of them that tast it, that they will turne up both backe and belly, with the giddines of that operation.

Oh sir quoth the Scholler, a vengeance on the devill, heere is a long tale quickly construed: Jacke of both sides for a bagge of money, where among the companie of the Brokers the devill angleth for the Usurers. But I pray you sir on with your fishing, and if you have doone with your substantiall, begin with your metaphoricall.

Sir, quoth the Angler, in truth my store of gold is so little, that I care not if I speake no more of the hooke: and nowe, touching the metaphoricall fishing, I found it onely by wit, a conceited kind of hooke, that is onely layd in the shallow sence of understanding, where kinde fooles are cosend with faire words of fine devises: as a foule Crowe, to bee perswaded with eloquence,

that shee is beloved for her white bill, till to feede a flattering humor, shee leave never a feather in her wing. Oh, quoth the Scholler, I understand you, as he that made faire wether with Vulcan, because he would make faire worke with Venus. No, no, that is a foolish kinde of fishing, to fish for a Codshead, and carry a knaves head to market. Oh brother quoth the scholler, you are too plaine in your Adverbs. In truth answered the Angler, it is not worthy the name of Proverb: for every note of experience is not a golden sentence, and yet give a foole a Cocks-combe, and let every honest man have his right: for my selfe, I never loved to angle for credite with a shewe of more sober countenaunce then simple meaning, for in truth brother, and verily sister, made the devill daunce Trenchmore, where hipocrisie blew the bagpipe. Yea, quoth the Scholler, how catch you a Trowt but with a silken flye, and can you better deceive a foole, then with a Taffatie face? Oh sir, laugh upon every man at the first sight, make a curtsie of the old fashion, say a long grace without booke, find fault with long haire, and great ruffes, and tell youth of his folly, and all imperfections of the flesh, shall be excluded from the spirit.

Oh sir, quoth the Scholler, you shoulde have set downe *probatum,* a good medicine for a mad humor, to take phisicke without an Apothicarie, & to bleede in a lither vaine. Goe to sir, quoth the Angler, such fits of naturall philosophy, put you from your booke, and mee to mine angle: but leaving these new tricks of an

old daunce, let us fall again to our old galiard*: and touching angling, say that a madde fellow made a baite of a faire wench, to catch a foule churl withall, how many favours might her sweete eyes plucke out of his sower hart? In deede, quoth the Scholler, it is not a little treason in youth, to catch age in a wheele-barrow, especially when an Ape brings a Beare to seeke honnie in a Bee-hive. Well sir, said the Angler, what say you to him, that angleth with a counterfeite Diamond, to deceive an ignorant Lapidarie. Alas quoth the Scholler, it is but a common Enterlude, betwixt the cunning of witte, and the folly of pride. Yea, quoth the Angler, but what say you of honestie? I thinke as fooles doe of learning, it may be spared at the market, and hindereth the Country from good sport. In deede Sir, quoth the Scholler, an Accidence in an old cover, hath no grace in Court library. And a ballad, be it never so good, it goes a begging after the Faire: and for honestie, it is such a jest, that even the begger is wearie of it, it hath so little place among other people.

Oh sir, quoth the Angler, you forget your selfe, hath not vertue beene ever the beauty of learning, and honesty such a Badge, as puts downe a painted Cognisaunce? In deed, quoth the Scholler, I must confesse, *Olim meminisse juvabit*, it doth mee good to thinke of honesty, though it thrive but ilfavoredly: for *Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis*, we may goe in our Jerkins in Somer, but we must have a Cloake for the

*Galiard : a gay sprightly dance.

Winter. Indeede I have seene the devil painted like a Friar when he went to deceive a Nun, and Judas looked like a holy brother, when hee played the villaine with his best Maister. Did you take these for Fishermen quoth the Angler? But ilfavored ones qd. the Scholler, when the one of them layd his baite in hell, and the other followed his hooke to the devill: and yet I have heard it is a common note in the world, for Friars to bee wanton, and rich men to be covetous.

Indeede quoth the Angler, you say well, *Mediocria firme*: better be walking in the high-way, then building Castles in the ayre, or seeking Lobsters in the Sea: but let me talke with you further of angling. Say that Beggery had found out ambition, and laying a plot for his possession, never thought of honestie, till his villany were at an end, when the bewitching of an idle eare, may breed the losse of an addle head: what say you to this angling? I say, quoth the Scholler, while the Peacock is gazing at his trayne, the Foxe will be knitting of his hose-garters.* Well sir quoth the Angler, sith I see you so merry with this metaphoricall kind of fishing, I wil tell you a little of the Fantasticall. This last kinde of angling is onely in conceit, where wit lacking understanding, layeth his baite in a dreame, to catch a foole, when he is awake: as when an overweening spirit of his owne power, wil compasse the course of the seaven starres, with staring only at the

*'Knitting of his hose-garters,' *i.e.* into a noose with which to hang the peacock.

Moone, and so looseth the benefite of his studie. Oh sir quoth the Scholler, such a one was he that having a Deere in chase in his sleep, when hee waked, found that a Calfes head and the braines, gave but a Huntsman and his dogge theyr dinner.

Well sir, quoth the fisherman, there is another fantasticall angling, called *Quasi*, as if it were: As a mad fellowe in a poeticall furie, imagining he had a Mistres, made love to his conceit. Oh quoth the Scholler, I know such a fellow, as making verses of Venus, who was better acquainted with the black Smith, forgetting his better businesse, and gaining nothing by his idle labour, found he had beene better to have kept his wits fasting, then to cosen his belly of his breakefast. Well, quoth the Angler, what say you to him that baytes his hooke with a fained Ague, to steale favour from Pitty. Indeed quoth the scholler, when women were wont to be kindharted, conceits in men were verie favourous: and who could be so pittilesse, as to see the conswaption* of a kinde humor, for a word of little good meaning. But now a dayes I hope there are no such men, knowing the nature of the femall sexe, given rather to love a strong body, then a strong breath, and a good purse, then a faire tale. Wel said sir quoth the Angler, but what think you of him that angleth for authoritie, with a devised countenaunce of counterfeit majestie. I thinke quoth the scholler, that Fisherman to bee the Asse in the Lyons skinne, whom the Foxe with long flattery leading to fear the wolfe from his

*Conswaption: conception?

borrough, no sooner hearde the Owle sounde her Trupet, but he threw off his proud coverpaine, and ran home to his old Crib, like a tall souldiour at a course Manchet.* Well sir quoth the Angler, but what say you of him that angleth for a Budget† in the high-way? Oh sir, quoth the Scholler, such open-eyed sleepers, ere they be well broade awake, may hap to be hangd for their dreame. In good earnest sir, quoth the Angler, I can but smile at your pleasant aunswers: But since I see the Sunne draweth downe apace, and I feare we shall have shorter time of conference, then may be I hope with both our good lykings, I will no further trouble you with these kinds of anglings: but after that I have tolde you of the nature of some fishes, I will tell you a little tale of the choosing of their King. Sir, quoth the Scholler, your kindnes being such as expects no ceremonies in courtesie, let it suffice you, that what I friendly receave, I will thankfully requite, which if I cannot as I would, I wil deserve as I may. Sir quoth the Angler, to make no long harvest of a little corne, I will tell you touching the nature of fishes, I finde this by experience, that the Porpoise sildome playes, but it is a signe of foule weather. True, quoth the Scholler, a gentill Prognosticator, for him that is weary of his life: *An.* The Whale is never hurt, but he makes his will on the shore. *Sch.* Good: where his Oyle is better for the Merchant, then his body was for the Mariner. *An.* The Herings seldom scull,‡ but on a thick misty

* Manchet : a small loaf of bread.

† Budget : leather bag. ‡ Scull : school.

morning. *Sch.* A wholsom kind of meat, like the aire that he delights in. *An.* The Mackrell brings in Sommer, for he comes but in May. *Sch.* Like a Nosegay of flowers, that is no longer sweet then it is new gathered. *An.* The Stockfish must be beaten: yea, and then quoth the Scholler, it makes a jolly messe of brewes.* *An.* The Cunger† must be sowst, and the Eele in a Spechcock,‡ or els they are not in their kind: In deed, quoth the Scholler, a raw Shrimp, and a burned Oyster, are no very pleasant dishes to disgest: But me thinks this is but the nature of their dressings: You say well, quoth the Angler, for in deede all fishes are by nature windy: watry you would say, quoth the Scholler, for I am sure take them out of the water except it be hote water, & the wind will doe them little good: No, quoth the Angler, I meane winde in another sence: Oh you meane eyther breeding of the chollicke, or blowing of the backpipe, but a good cup of Sack, will kill the malice of a red Herring: but Sir, since, to tell you true, I take no great care of their conditions, having a stomack of that disgestion, that was never afraide of a raw Oyster, I pray you let mee heare your tale of the choosing of theyr king: Sir, quoth the Angler, as I have heard it I will tell you: in the unknowne deepes, of the wonderful water, called the never seene Sea: when fishes could speake, and waves carried newes to the banckes of the earth to mocke the babies of the world, it was a noise in

* Brewes : brewing, broth. A pun on bruise.

† Cunger : conger, sea-eel.

‡ Spechcock : an eel split lengthwise and broiled.

the ayre, that if there were not a King in the water, Frogs would eat up the fishes: whereupon poore fooles holding an opinion, that wonders might come to passe, fell to a counsaile among them selves, how to choose a King for their comfort. For a little time great hold and show was among them, in so much that there was a great feare of civill warres to grow among them. Some would have the Whale for his greatnes, some the Dolphin for his swiftnes, other the Sword-fish for his stoutnes: but when the Whale was seene unwildy, though he were great, the Dolphin was too nimble to trust to, and the Sword-fish too dangerous to dwell by: they no sooner saw the Herring come with his million attendants, but his readines to beare them company, at all times, and at all services, made them with generall consent to goe of his side, & so he receaved his tytle: But among the slow fishes that sliding low by the water, could make no hast to the Court, came, the Plaise with a pied coate: who had no little hope, that his cost would purchase him great honour: But beeing met by the way, by one that either pittied his expence, or laught at his folly, he was told he might returne home againe, as he came: for the King was chosen, & allowed. Who (quoth the Plaise) the Whale? no: why so? He was unwildy: the Dolphin? no, and wherefore? he was too nimble: the Sword-fish? no: for what cause? He was too quarrelsome: the Codde? neither, for what fault? He gaped so wide, his throat was full of flyes: who then? The Herring: Herring (quoth the Plaise) wrying his mouth so in

scorne, that he could neither* since set it straite. And reason (quoth the Scholler) when a foole in a pyed coate, will be putting for a kingdome: he must have his mouth, or his necke, or somewhat stand awry ever after.

But Sir, for your tale I thanke you, for I have heard it often, but not in this manner. But I pray you Sir let me intreate you, to tell me a little of the properties, and services of the fishes, especially, such River fish as you take pleasure to angle for. I will tell you (quoth the Angler) for Sea-fish, I have not beene acquainted with many: but so farre as I can speake I will tell you mine opinion. My judgement is that the Porpoise is like a Swine, a great devourer of Sprats, that makes him in taste so like a red Herring: and being served at a table, he is a good grosse dish, for a course stomack. Olde Ling without mustard is like a blew coate without a Cognisaunce, and a peece of Greene-fish† with Sorrell sauce, is no meane service in an Alehouse. A Whiting is so old a Courtier, that he cannot loose the credite of his service: Fresh Sammon, Sturgeon, and Conger, are no victuals for poore people, especially for weake stomacks, that must have wine for their disgestion. Oysters are stirring meate, especially with the help of an onion: Mussles, and Lobsters, Crabs, and Tortus, are dangerous for Agues: Smelts are good for women with child, and Shrimps are pretty picking meate, for idle people after dinner: now for River fish which we

* Neither : never.

† Greene-fish : coal fish, *gadus virens*.

cheefely call Fresh-fish. The Pike is so ravenous, that he will destroy a whole pond, and eate up his fellow Pickrell: mary* the Pearch is so backed, that he dare not meddle with his bristles: the Carpe feeds most in the night: the Eele ever stirs most after a raine, and the Tench is the only Surgeon for al the Brooke: But for Roches, Bleaks, Dase, and such like, they are such little fooles, that against every little shower, they will be caught with a Fly. For their services, a Pike in broath, a Carpe baked, an Eele rosted, a Tench sowsed, a Smelt fried, and a Shrimp new sodden, are served in their best kindes: but of all fishes, fresh, or salt, whatsoever opinion is held of dainty tastes, the Herring is he that passeth Towne and Countrey for a good fellow: and thus much for my knowledge in fishing. Now for the cause that first led me into the delight of this kinde of angling, I will tell you. When I found the substantiall angling, with the golden hooke, was sometime devillish: the Metaphoricall with the conceited hooke, was often knavish & the fantasticall, with the dreaming hooke, was foolish, I thought it better, living (as I doe not farre hence) to walke from my house hether to the water side: and angle for a dish for my supper, then runne into the Towne I knowe not among whom, to gape like a Codshead, or so practise with a knaves head, that I may feare the devill in my conscience, ere I have halfe made my market for my dinner. In deede sir, quoth the Scholler, you say well: for when I was a Scholler in the Universitie, many yeares a goe: mee

*Mary : marry, indeed, forsooth.

thought solitarines was a sweete life, it did so avoide occasions of evill: but leaving my study, and falling into a little travaile, I have runne into such a world of varieties, that finding all vanities but vertue, I had rather walke as I doe sometime, to contemplate the hopes of the blessed, then to runne up and downe among the confusions of the wicked. Truly sir, quoth the Angler, I am glad to heare a Scholler make so good a benefite of his study: as having escaped the snares of the devill, as it seemes you have, that you are so adicted to serve God, as I hope you doe: but since you have beene both a Scholler and a travailer, I beseech you let mee be beholding to you, for a little both of your learning and experience. Sir, quoth the Scholler, to acquaint you a little with my learning, you shall understand, that after such time as I had passed the Punies forme,* that I had gone through the rules of my Grammer, reade over a little Poetry, and knew the grounds of Logick, I fell to the study of Philosophy, where finding Nature such a Mistres, and Reason such a Maister, that they could not agree without patience, I tooke no little delight to note the deviding of the quarrell. Furthermore I found such secrets by observation, as I would not have missed for a mountaine: As how, I pray you, quoth the Angler? Mary, quoth the Scholler, I will tell you: touching the quarrell first I will tell you. It is in the rules of Philosophy, that contraries cannot at one time be in one subject: which we see other wise doe fall out in a man, that warmes

*'Punies forme' : junior or lower form.

his hands, and cooles his pottage, and all with one breath.

Yea, quoth the Angler, so a knave may flatter his Maister, and abuse his friend, and all with one tongue: but what of that? I pray you goe on: howe decide you the quarrell? I will tell you, quoth the Scholler, by onely *Magis* and *Minus*, for in respect of the cold, it is warme, and in respect of the fire it is cold. Oh, quoth the Angler, I understand you by a Candle: which in the dark gives a pretty light, but in the Sunne it goes out. True, quoth the Scholler, so is a foole held wise, among wits of weake understanding: but in the judgement of discretion, he is quickly derided. Now the next point that I learned in natural Philosophy, was this: *Naturam expellas furca, licet, usque recurret:* That which is bred in the bone, will never out of the flesh. In deede, it is hard to turne black into any other colour: Kat after kinde* will be ever a good Mouse hunt. In deede, quoth the Angler, a Jack-daw is never like a Tassell-gentill†: but by your leave, what was your next note? This, quoth the Scholler, *Contra principia non est disputandum*: Which is this in effect: There is no disputing against principles. Oh, quoth the Angler, you meane with Princes, and good reason, for their prerogatives are great, and therefore their powers must be absolute, their displeasure feared, and their wills obeied. In deede, quoth the Scholler, you say true, he is higher

*'Kat after kinde,' a catch phrase, compare Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, Act 3, Sc. 2, 'If the cat will after kind.'

†'Tassell-gentill' : a trained male goshawk.

minded then witted, that will contend with his superiors; but that is not the sence of this sentence. There be some Rascalls called Athiests, that will dispute against the majesty of God. Oh, quoth the Angler, leave them to the mercy of the devill: and as you say hee that is so conceited of his wit, as to goe from all good understanding, let him goe hang himselfe in his owne Schoole, and God blesse me from his learning. Amen, and me to, quoth the Scholler: but now to an other point: *A particulare ad generale: non est tenenda ratio:* Though one man be true harted, every knave is not to be trusted. No, quoth the Angler, for one Swallow makes not Sommer: the Priest may be an honest man, and yet many a knave in the Parish: and Virgine wax is for Christmas lights, which is not solde be every Chandler. True, quoth the Scholler, some men growe wealthy with good conscience but it is not generall in these dayes. But to leave these Sentences, I will tell you further of my learning. I finde by my reading, that man was compounded of the foure Elements, of fire, water, earth, and ayre. How, quoth the Angler, is it possible? The fire drinke up the water, and the earth dry up the aire, and when they are consumed, what is left to make man of? Oh sir quoth the Scholler, I thus understand the foure Elements, Choller, Fleame, Blood, and Melancholie. Indeede qd. the Angler, I thinke you say true, a cholerick fellow, will be angrie with his owne shadowe: and a flegmatick woman, hath her nose ever dropping: a melancholie foole, is like a dreame of a dry Sommer: and a sanguine faced youth, will bleede at the nose if

he see a faire woman. Oh sir quoth the scholler, you speak merrilie, but let mee tell you, the chollerick man is soone angrie, and soone pleased: the flegmatick, is a better land man then a sea man: the sanguine, is a fine Courtier: and the melancholie, a great student. Just quoth the Angler, the chollericke is like a hastie pudding, soone hote, soone cold: the flegmatick is like a Culles,* consumed into jelly: the sanguine like a Cherrie tart, that would say come eate mee, ere I came at it: and the melancholie, like a browne loafe that had beene halfe burnt in the baking. Truely sir quoth the Scholler, I have not often heard such descant upon a plaine song: but let mee tell you, that without the knowledge of these grounds, it is hard for the Phisition to minister cure of a disease. Well quoth the Angler, what soever you note by your reading, this I finde by observation, that fire is good in Winter, and water in Sommer, ayre sweet in ye spring, and earth most comfortable in the harvest: and good cheere and honest company, makes a merry hart, and a sound bodie. I like not to study too farre into Nature, to forget God, or to confound reason: indeede if Phisitions cannot judge of simples, they may thinke of Coin, but they shall come by few pounds. But yet for all my jesting, I pray you goe on with your good instructions.

Well sir then qd. the scholler, the next was this, *Natura semper gignit sibi similem:* an Eagle never hatcht an Owle, nor of a Lyon came a Monkie. True qd. the Scholler, a bird is commonlie knowne by his feather, for every

*Culles : strained jelly.

long bill is not a Woodcock. No quoth the Angler, that is true, and yet maister Constable may be wealthy, and his sonne an unthrift. Oh quoth the scholler, hee may perhaps take after the Mother, who did eate up her Creame when she should have kept it for Butter: but to tell truth, a Greyhound and a Mastiffe never breede but a mungrell. But I will tell you further of my notes: I learne the propertie, qualitie and effect of manie things, as first and chieflie of Man. Reason is proper to every man, honestie, to many a man: now reason with honestie, effects credite with commendation. Well said qd. the Angler, and contrariwise, a man may have reason to enriche himselfe, but if his qualitie be to be a thiefe or a Traytor, the effect will be shame and hanging, if he chaunce to scape hell after. Very true quoth the scholler: but now in other things, as in Corne, to grow is the property, to make bread his quality, and his effect is our nouriture. But quoth the Angler, if the ground be not well tilled, the seed well sowne, and the dow well kneaded, you may happen as good be fasting, as to keepe your stomacke for a loafe: but what say you of quantitie? Indeed quoth the Scholler you say true: a good quantitie of monie, will help to give a little wit, but I have seene one no higher then a horse-loafe, wiser then a world of wormes-meat. But indeede according to the quantitie of your Roses, you must looke for your sweet water from your Still. Oh sir quoth the Angler, you meane according to the quantitie of your wit, you must looke for the sweete of your inventions. Sir quoth the scholler, how soever my inventions are,

I am sure yours are so quicke, that if I were againe to goe to schoole, I should be glad of such a Maister. Well qd. the Angler, flattery is an idle poynt of Rethoricke, and therefore I pray you let me intreate you to give me leave to bee merry with you, and crave a few of your notes uppon your Morall philosophy. Sir quoth the scholler, in briefe, with thanks for your kindnes, I will graunt your request: My first note was, that *Omnes sibi melius esse male quam alterio:* Every man had better be his owne friende then his neighbours. Oh qd. the Angler, but that is a rule against good fellowship. Why so, quoth the scholler, I think he that will not provide for his owne breakefast, can hardly bid his friende to dinner. Well sir quoth the Angler, what say you to your sentence in this sence? A young lover in a cold night, gave his wench his cloake, and went himselfe in his doublet in the raine. I say quoth the scholler, love is deerer then life, and therefore, shee beeing the summe of his harts joy, hee preferred his Mistres before himselfe, according to the custome of kinde harts. Oh quoth the Angler, such Lovers indeede are pretty fooles, like the bird that flies in the ayre, and suffereth his henne, to hatch her eggs on his backe, while hee flies up and downe, for meat for her dinner. But in deede to tell you truth, neerer is my skin then my coate, and that is the plaine sence of your sentence. Well then qd. the scholler, to goe on with another note: *Frustra sapit qui non sapit sibi:* He is a foole for all his wit, that is not wise for himselfe. Indeed quoth the Angler, he that will till his neighbours ground, before he hath

done with his own, may happen to have Corne in the fielde, when other have theyr harvest in the Barne. Indeed sir quoth the Scholler, hee that doth for other, for I thanke you, till hee say to himselfe I beshrew you, he may have more kinde wit, then commodious understanding: but by your leave, among many that have been studients in this course of instruction, I finde one notable vile creature, whose philosophy I may rather call mortall then morrall, his notes are so full of poyson, to the spirit of all good disposition: and this good old Gentleman, his name was Machavile. Oh quoth the Angler, a vengeance of all villaines, I thinke there was never such another: hee hath left such devillish lessons to the worlde, that I thinke hee will hardlie come at heaven. I pray you, sir, quoth the Angler, let mee intreate you to recite some of them. I will tell you sir qd. the scholler, among many notes that I tooke out of divers places of his discourses, I remember this was one of the first: That it was good for a man of conscience to keep the bands of his oath: and yet when pollicie may purchase a good purse, an oath hath been ventered for a lesse matter then a million. *Ang.* O bace companion, a fit steward for the devill, to bring soules into hell. A gentle instruction to perswade a covetous sprite, to bring the body and soule to destruction. But by your leave, he that will venture his own soule, shall have nothing to doe with my bodie. Wel, what was the next note? Mary quoth the Scholler, that Fathers in their government should be feared of theyr Chyldren: But quoth the Angler, I am not of his minde

in that poynt: for love breedes more assurance then feare dooth comfort. But what els? *Sch.* That it is good for Maisters to be bountifull to their servants, were it not, that Keepers will say, that fatte hounds will hunt but lazilie. Yea quoth the Angler, such lessons as these, drives so many poore serving men, that pay for their own liveries, to runne on the skore for their breakefasts. But I pray you what more? *Sch.* That he that will not curtsie to a Milstone, make musick to an Owle, daunce trenchmore with an Ape, and fall to wonder at a Wethercocke, may hope after nuts, and pick on shells for his comfort.

Tush man qd. the Angler, are these of his notes? Not in these wordes, but to this effect aunswered the Scholler. Indeede quoth the Angler, now that I doe remember mee, I thinke he that can carry a Ring in his mouth, a booke under his arme, a penne in his eare, and a knife in his pocket, may hap to make himselfe good cheere, when better minds may misse their dinner: but on with your notes I pray you. Sir quoth the Scholler, I will tell you, I red in certaine notes of a scholler of his, that a man that will thrive in the world, must have his eye upon one, his hand upon another, his foote upon the third, and his tongue for the fourth: but hee must not set his hart upon any of them: for if he grow in love with a woman, or in league with a friend so farre, that he commit his secrets to his keeping, his head is under anothers girdle, his purse at an others commaund, and his wits in an others keeping: and then, for lack of a little discretion, he may even goe

currant for a foole. Oh this was a pretty scholler at the devills Alphabet, quoth the Angler, was not Timon of Athens one of the fathers of his church? who gave counsaile to the afflicted to hang themselves for their comfort. I thinke he was quoth the scholler: but God blesse every good spirit from such a wicked kind of humor: But to goe on, I red further, that it was no little proofe of wit, to finde out a prodigall heire to use him like a younger brother: and if they were ever a Lawyer of a large conscience, what a bribe might doo for a conveiance. Oh quoth the Angler, the pillary is a fit window for such villaines to looke out at. But are these the best notes that you remember in his studie? Not the best quoth the scholler, nor the worst, but as they come into my head, I tell you them. I pray you sir quoth the Angler, have you not beene a little red in historiographie, or doo you not remember anie pretty accident that hath fallne out in your travaile, which in the discourse of your kindnes might doe well to entertaine the tyme with.

Trulie quoth the Scholler, I was never any great historian, neither hath my travaile beene long, yet have I seene more than I have red: but of eyther, as time will give me leave, I will tell you a little to laugh at. First touching histories, or rather indeed fained tales, as good as fables, I red in a booke whose Author I have forgotten, a discourse of a man whose name I found not written, but sith the matter is somewhat fresh in memory, I will as neere as I can recite it, and thus it was. There was an old man of more age then grace,

who having spent all his youth in byrding, fell in his elder yeeres to Connycatching,* but when the arrest of Time, brings the long day to a darke night, that no coine could make excuse, for none appearance upon the sommon, Death would be satisfied with no aunswere, but depart: thys old fellow, having a young son, much after the greedy humor of his grosse Sire, before hee ended his life, close at the bedds side delivering him up the keyes of his Coffers, left hym thys lesson for a farewel: My boy, qd. he, if thou wilt be wise and take heede, I leave thee enough to keepe thee like a man, and therefore looke to thy selfe, for when the money is gone, thou maist goe hang thy selfe for any helpe thou shalt have of thy friends, flatter thee as many as list, as there be knaves enough in the worlde, to find out a foole ere he be halfe bred: but marke wel my words, make much of mony, for tis a jewell in these daies. If thou have land and mony, a faire house, and a good purse, then if thy nose stood in thy forehead, and thine eyes in thine elbowes, thy head like a paved causie betweene two thinne growne hedges, nere a good tooth in thy head, good word in thy mouth, nor good thought in thy hart, yet if thou hast thy purse well lined, thou shalt have prayers of the begger, a curtsie of thy fellowes, welcom of thy friend, and perhaps a glaunce of a faire Lady: if not, thou shalt have a wench that shall ride as merrily to the market, as if she were sette on a side saddle of the best fashion. Nowe, if thy money bee gone, the begger is thy companion, the foole

*Connycatching: cheating and thieving.

bidds thee welcome to a Pescod, the knave stands and laughs at thee, and the honest man, perhaps more pitties thee then releeves thee: the proude man scornes thee, thy vertues are buried, thy name forgotten, thy qualities are trifles, thy learning but lost, thy wit but folly, and thy honestie put to no use: thy friend regardes thee not, thy wench knowes thee not, and thy foe spares thee not: and thou art left to sorrow to make an end of thy miseries, or by some desperat cowrse to fall into Gods forbid.* And therefore my boy make much of thy money, it will bring thee musick when thou art melancholie, phisick when thou art sick, and company when thou art solitary. Remember what I say, looke to the maine chaunce: *Aurum potabile* wil fetch him to life that is halfe dead. Be true to thy Prince for feare of hanging: bee not busie with religion for feare of trouble: strive not with power for feare of a fall, and spende not thy mony for feare to goe a begging: Loe, this is all I have to say to thee, Oh I have a paine at my hart, and so hee died.

Why quoth the Angler, did hee never bidde him serve God, nor call himselfe on him for comfort? Alas quoth the Scholler, how could he thinke on God, and the devill always so neere him? Well quoth the Angler, wee must not judge any man, but I woulde be loth to be his halfe at the day of Doome. But I pray you what

*'Gods forbid': God's forbode, *i.e.* God forbid. Compare Nash's 'Have with you to Saffron Waldon': 'He is beyond all reason, or God's Forbod, distractedly enamoured of his own beautie.' See also *Wil of Wit*, vol. 2, p. 20.

other pretty history or devised tale have you read in some other humor, that may serve the turne to passe away the time withall. Sir quoth the scholler, I have red many pretty toyes, too tedious at this time to call to memory, but among all I remember one pretty discourse of a Lady and her servant. Oh quoth the Angler, I beleeve tis a love tale; if it be it shall be welcome. For, to tell you true, though I be in this tyme of my declining youth, an unfit dauncer in such a Morice, yet let me ever love musicke, though I cannot tune a virginall: it is a good confirming of my repentance, to heere a president of my imperfection. Then sir qd. the scholler, thus it was, or at least was said to be. In the Iland of ill fortune, where idle heads seeke for favors and vertue hath little countenaunce, where money is the great Monarch, it fell out that in the court of the Duke of Calliflorida, among many creatures of woorthy commendation, there was one especiall faire Lady of so honourable a spirit, and excellent a wit, as gave the wise admiration, in her conference, and the valiant, happines in her favour: this pure Diamond among a number of faire jewels, I meene this kinde of Angelicall creature, among a troope of sweet Ladies, as shee could not but be honoured of many, so was shee especially followed with the affectionate service of one woorthy Cavaliere, above many other: much there was to bee commended in them both, but let this for my discourse suffice, shee was exceeding faire and wise, and he no lesse kinde then trulie valiant, but as it seemed by that which was written of them,

his understanding was inferior to her wit, whose beautie had the commaund of his resolution.

Long had this poore Gentleman with the silence of love followed this princely Lady: who mor favouring his discretion, then revealing her owne conceite, tooke this occasion one faire evening in a pleasant Garden, to single herselfe from company, and in a solitary walke, espying her servant all alone, met him sodainly at a halfe turne, when putting up her Maske to salute his reverence with a word of favour, as though her comming thether had beene by chaunce, which was done indeede of set purpose, shee entertained the time with this speech. Sir, quoth she, thus you see the course of the world: each conceite hath his crosse, and a woman a crosse conceite to a thousand. I am sure you little thought, choosing out this solitary walke, for the better passage of your meditations, to meete so unhappily, and unlooked for, with the subject of so much trouble. The poore Gentleman little expecting either so kinde a companion, or so sweet a speech, with no little gladnes, made the Lady this aunswere. Good Madam, to make a trouble of comfort, were so unkinde a construction of happines, as howsoever other conceive of it, I desire not to be acquainted with it: but when the hart of a poore Souldiour, had rather with his sword make way for his Mistres honour, then with his tongue for his owne favour, Let me humbly perswade so farre with your good discretion, that if in the kindnes of your commaund, you will vouchsafe the employment of my service, I doe not doubt but that

in the proofe of my action, you will easily see my affection, which in the onely hope of your good countenaunce, shall set up the rest of my worlds honour: To which short speech the Lady no lesse quicke witted, then well reade, made him this sodaine aunswere. Oh sir, Souldiours generally are of that imperious humour, that they had rather commaund a looke then yeeld to a tittle: and in mine opinion, if Cupid were now alive, Mars would cut his bow-string, ere he should doe any good with his arrowes, so that by want of the company of good spirits, Diana might keepe alone in the Woods, while Venus might make her will in her Chamber. Truly Madame, aunswered the knight, I knowe not what fed the Poets wits, to faine such fables as are written: but for my selfe, while in your vertue, I behold the object of my honour, I will rather divote my service to your worthines, then trouble my selfe with trifles that I dare not trust, as are the fictions of idle heads, or the painted covers of inward imperfections. Sir Knight quoth the Lady, by the little sight of our eye, wee behold a great circuite of the earth: and shall not the spirit of our understanding through the eye of our minde, behold the light of that truth, that may leade the eare of our reason, to the content of our conceite? I hope the best: and though as a mist may dim the sight of the eye, and dissembling the sence of the mind, yet for that I will try before I doubt, and commaund before I favour: let the patience of your discretion attend the pleasure of my employment: and for all courses what soever fall out, if I doe you good,

be glad, not proud of it, and open not your window to the Sunne, when she hath power to sende her beames through the glasse: and so not entertaining your service, till I may acquaint you with my best content: I pray you walke aside for this time: For I see a Gallant, that I must talke with, and will soone be rid of. The good Knight unwilling, by any motion of discontent to put out the fire, that was now in kindling, with humble thanks tooke his leave, and left his Lady to her new Lover: who no sooner came neere her, but observing all fine ceremonies, with kissing his hand, in putting off his hat, with a *Passa* measure* pace comming toward her sweet presence, greetes her with this salutation. Faire Ladie, the Quintescence of your beauties excellence, hath so enflamed the spirit of my affection, that except I have favour in your eyes, my hart will surely consume to ashes: and therefore if my service may have acceptation in your contentment, I will not be behind with my good will to execute the office of your commaund. The Lady with a blushing smile at this wise Gentlemans formality, made him this quicke and quipping aunswer. Sir, if your new coyned eloquence were not too farre out of the way of mine understanding, I would fit, you an aunswere to your motion: but since silence can best talke with wooden Rethoricke, I pray you sir if you have any thing to say to me, let me plainely know your meaning: Why, quoth this Whippet, if I should tell you I love you, and

* Passa measure: a slow dance. See also *Elogy of Queen Elizabeth*, vol. ii. p. 6.

you beleeve it not, if you beleeve it, and yet regard it not, if you regard it, and yet confesse it not: what shall I be the better to speake plainliar then I have reason? Well sir, quoth the Lady, to this aboundance of little wit, if I did like to study upon such Riddles, I should perhaps trouble my selfe to finde out a fit aunswere for the cipher of reason. But to tell you plaine, your love I knowe not, your selfe I love not, your words I regard not, and how you take it I care not: But if you have any thing to say to any other ende, I will heare you as I thinke good, and aunswere you as I see cause. Why then Madam, quoth he, to tell you plaine, my Lord your Father saw you out of his window walking with Signor Felio, and upon the sodaine willed me to come for you. Well sir, quoth the Lady, nothing dismaide at the message, I am ready to attend his pleasure, though I wish he had sent a fitter servant to mine humour: But to make as short a tale as I may, sending word by this odde Gallant, that she would forthwith attend his pleasure, calling to her a Gentlewoman, that she saw sitting in an Arbour somewhat neere unto her, taking her in her attendance, away shee goes to her good Father, who with a naturall kindnes dissembling his discontent, in suspect of the talk had betwixt her and Don Felio, with a smiling countenance entertained her with this welcome: taking her by the hand, and leading her into his Gallery, he began in privat thus to fall in talke with her. My best girle, whom above all the children that I have, I most esteeme in the true joy of my hart, and well woorthy, for thy good caridge in all

courses, as well for thy dutie towardes mee, as thy reputation in the world, I must confesse, I never had cause to suspect thy discretion in anie cause of dislike, but if a Fathers care proove a kinde of jealousie, excuse the error in aboundance of love, and tell me truth to a question that I will put unto thee. The sweet Ladie, not willing to delay her Father with long circumstance, with a modest countenaunce, not once altering her colour, but keeping the care of her wit, intreated her commaundement of her dutie: who in kinde manner made her this speech. I have been heere in my Gallery walking most part of this evening, and looking out at one of these windowes, I espied Don Felio all alone, walking in a turne or two in the long walke, where hee had beene but a while, when you found him in the Muses, and entertained him, or he you, I knowe not with what conference. The man is one that I love, and will be gladde to preferre to any honour that he deserveth, but I pray thee tel mee, what was the substance of your talke?

Truely Father, quoth Madam Fianta, for so was her name, I would gladly tell it you if I might presume upon her [your] patience, and not doubt your displeasure, I will acquaint you with as much as I can remember. The Duke expecting another matter then she delivered, with a dissembled countenaunce of promised content, willed her boldlie to say her minde. Then good Father quoth the Lady, thus it is: little thinking to find any creature in that walk, when singling my selfe from my company, I tooke my Booke

of Daplisses* in my hand, and meant to contemplate some divine contentations, beeing neere unto him ere I was aware, and loth either to disgrace him with entreating his absence, or upon the suddaine to withdrawe my selfe from his companie, in such good manner as it might well beseeme him, he saluted me with this speech. Honourable Ladie, I am sorry that it is my ill happe to become a trouble to your contentive solitarines: but howe dooth my good Ladie, and your good Father? Him quoth I, in good health I left not long since, and my selfe you see, not troubled with good companie: but what should make Don Felio to chuse thys solemne place for his solace? Alas Madam, quoth the poore Knight, I dare speake to your Ladiship, who in the pitty of your vertue have ever beene a good furtherer of all sutes of your Fathers servants: so ill hath been my hap, that after the spending of many yeeres, loosing of no little blood, and wasting of some part of my little substance, nowe there is no use for mee in his warres, to make my adventure uppon the enemie, my yeeres growing to that height, that I must before the declining of my best age, put my wits to some worke for the better releefe of my poore carkasse, and maintaining of my meane estate: having had a long sute unto him, which by the crosnesse of my backe friends† I am almost now out of hope to enjoy, I am devising not far hence neere unto the Cittie, in a large

* 'Booke of Daplisses' : 'Du Plessis'—translated by Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke.

† 'Backe friends' : secret enemies.

Orchard that I have belonging to my house, to set up an Ape-baiting: which beeing a new matter, and never in practise, at least, that ever I heard in this Countrie, will tole* a world of wise people together, who shall pay everie one for his comming in, howsoever they repent it at their going out: nowe I will tell you in what manner it shall be. I will have an Ape tied to a great logge, which shall rounde aboute be sette with Bee-hives, and when the Ape is sette among them, his nature is to catch at anything that buzzeth in his eare: now when one Bee hath beene about him, and hee fall to catch and misse, that Bee will bring another, and that another, till in a little time Jacke will be so stunge, that what with mowing, crying, and skipping, he will make sport enough for a penny. Now before the sport begin, there shall at the enterance into the Garden sitte a blinde man, and a deafe woman, disputing an argument of love, and at the further end of the Alley, a Bagpipe and a Citron,† play Trenchmore to a Tinkers dogge. Now will not this doo well for a devise to helpe a poore man to a little mony?

Nowe fie Sir, quoth I, lay away this melancholy humour, I will rather be your friend to my Father, and help you to a farre better matter, then you shall purchase by this badde or base invention: and therefore I pray you to lay aside your determination in this poynt, till you heare further from mee of my Father.

* Tole : draw, allure.

† Cittron : Chitarrone, a double-necked lute of great length.

The good old Prince, little thinking his pretty Monkie could upon the suddaine have devised this Apish tale, giving credite to her discourse, made her this joyfull aunswere. My deere Fianta, I must confesse, he hath had back-friends in his fortune, yet hath not his desert lien dead in my favour: for no longer then yesterday, have I signed, and caused my seale to be set to the graunt of his sute, which to morrow thou shalt give him, with my purse full of gold, for hee is one that I love deerlie, how soever I make shew of lesse matter: soone at night forget not to come to me for it. And so with a few other good words, left her to her best company to her liking: who the next morning, having received her fathers blessing, with his bountifull tokens of favour to her servant, secretlie sent to the Knight, to meet her in the walke where he left her. The message not a little welcome, made him not long in comming to his deere Mistresse, of whom receiving for the terme of three-score yeeres, the gift of a statelie house, with divers goodly Lordshippes and Parks to the same belonging, with his purse full of mony, the better to defray his charges, with humble thanks to his gracious Maister, and no lesse to his deere Mistresse, who had thoroughly acquainted him with the course shee had taken for him, according to her secret discretion hastend himselfe into the Country, where after a few love-letters that had passed betwixt them, within a little time the Duke died, and his daughter (with her dowrie) made a match with her true Knight. Oh fine tale quoth the Angler, made upon the fingers ends:

for it could not be but there were many crosse tricks in the Cardes ere the game went about, but you see the time is short, and therefore you doe well to abridge the best. But now Sir, if in kindnes I may, I pray you let mee intreat a little of your travaile, what you have noted in your passage to and fro. Sir quoth the Scholler, to tell you a little heere and there what I have seene and noted, I am contented: and therefore to be short, I will tell you in one Country where I came I sawe a strange wonder: for whereas in many other Countries men did use to eate up the sheepe, in that Country sheep had eaten up both the men & their houses. For in the pastures, where I sawe great flocks of sheepe feeding, I might neere unto certaine foote-pathes, behold heere and there a peece of an olde stone causie, which had been in times past some streete or by lane, in some Towne or Village, but nowe there was neither house nor towne, nor man left, more then the Sheep-heard, and his sheepish Maister to looke upon them:* this was one of my first notes. In an other Country I found ye speech of the people, a great alteration of men, for a number of Gentlemen of auncient race, by the wretched course of fortune, or folly of their owne or theyr friends indiscretion, were gone from the Court to the Cart, and the sonne of What lacke you, was become the onely right worshipfull. This is my second note.

* This passage refers to the great misery caused throughout England by the increase of sheep farming for wool-growing, whereby farm labourers were thrown out of employment in great numbers and the small-holders ruthlessly evicted.

Well Sir quoth the Angler, touching your first note, let me tell you, that the Wethers wool sticks not in the Graziers teeth, and a good purse with quiet, makes one plough worth two swords. But on I pray you with some more of your notes, for I like these very well. I will tell you quoth the Scholler, in one Country where I came, I sawe the Woods so brave it with great trees, and the Barnes so florish with sheaves of Corne, that a number of poore people dyed with hunger and cold. Alas quoth the Angler, that is too common in many Countries: but indeede it is pittie to see such dogged mindes among Christians, or at least, such as make profession of Christianitie: but on I pray you with your discourse. In an other Country quoth the Scholler, I saw one yeere such bloodshed, that there hath been warres there ever since. Alas quoth the Angler, the massacre in Paris* can be your witnesse for that truth: where the devill and the Pope made the Duke of Guise the chiefe murtherer. In another Country quoth the scholler, I sawe men given so to drinke, that God to punish theyr sinne, drowned a great part of the Land. You say true, quoth the Angler, they that poure so much liquor into their owne bellies, deserve to have some water in their beds: but proceed I pray you. In an other Country I saw many pretty accidents, though of no great importance, yet worth the noting: of which one I remember, which I am perswaded will make you smile to heare, if at the least I can hit neere the manner of it, as I heard it. I pray you heartily quoth the Angler, let

* The massacre of St. Bartholomew 1572.

me be beholding to you for it. Not so, quoth the Scholler, but to content your kindnes, thus it was. Having travailed long uppon a rainy day, and after a weary journey beeing somewhat wet, come into mine Inne, beeing brought into the Parlour to mine Hoast, who it seemed by his sheepe-furd short gowne, to be the Officer for that parish, I meane the pinching of bread, and sucking of pots, besides prisoning of Theeves, carrying beggers to the stocks, and watching of the towne at midnight that it ranne not over the bridge, for lacke of a gate to keepe it in before morning, and keeping the kay of the Cage,* and the Cucking-stoole,† after the manner of some formall Constable: this substantiall Yeoman, who as it should seeme to be the Sonne of some Fleshmonger, as Muttons, Beefes, and such like commodious kinde of Beasts, who together with his In-keeping, and the helpe of Maide Marian, a good Hostes to draw on gesse,‡ could with his grosse nodle, making a night gowne of an Oxe-hide, keepe himselfe warme in a colde Winter, and purchase not onely the house that he dwelt in, for this young Gentleman his biggest Sonne, but some olde Ruddocks§ for his young Roiles,‖ having brought up this his heire for

* Cage : prison. There are several Cages still standing in various parts of England, two fine examples are those at Lenham, Kent, and Breedon-on-the-Hill, Leicestershire. The house of Thomas Quiney (Shakespeare's son-in-law) at Stratford-on-Avon was formerly a Cage. Compare Shakespeare's *Henry VI.*, Pt. 2, Act 4, Sc. 2, 'His father had never a house but the Cage.'

† Cucking-stool : ducking stool for scolds.

‡ Gesse : guests. § Ruddocks : gold coins. ‖ Roiles : rover.

sometime at the free Schoole, and a little before his death put him to the University, made this cipher of wisdome, to observe his Fathers rule, in the education of a Sonne of his, who a little after my comming in, came home to his Father from the Academie, as it seemed, being sent for by his Parents, against the Christmas hollidayes, to be posed* by Maister Parson: but to be short, after wee had supped, mine Hoast calling for a chaire for himselfe, and an other for me, to environ a good warme banke, of Sea-cole† fire, few gesse being that night in the house, began to examine his Sonne of his study, in this manner. Come hether Sirra, how have you spent these five last yeeres, that I have beene at no little charge with you for your learning? Let me heare you what have you read, since you gave over your Grammer, and your Cato,‡ and those toyes. Sir, quoth the Boy, with a crooked curtsie, I first read Logick: Logick quoth the old man, a vengeance on it, what should you doe with it, an onely cunning of wit to play the knave with plaine meaning: a proper trick of treason, to maintaine a lye against truth. Well, what next? Forsooth, quoth the Boy, Rethorick: just quoth the old man, an other fine peece of learning to teach a lewd minde to paint out a false tale with faire words: but what more? Forsooth, quoth the Boy, the next was naturall Philosophy. What, quoth hee, doost thou meane to be a Phisition? Use

* Posed : puzzled by questions.

† Sea-cole : coal brought by sea from the north of England.

‡ Cato : school book.

abstinence, and keep good diet, and care not a pin for the Apothicary. But on with the rest: what else? Forsooth, quoth he, Morall Philosophy: What, quoth the olde man, to learne to leere and looke bigge, to curtsie and kisse the hand, to be at your silver forke, and your pick-tooth?* Sirra, it is not for your Fathers sonne, to trouble his head with these trifles, your Father followes the Cart, and thou art not shaped for a Courtier: but well, is this all: or is there any more yet? Yea forsooth, quoth the yong man, I have reade a little of Arithmatique: that quoth the olde Sir, I shall finde by the account of your battailing:† where, if *In primis* and *Item*, make *Totalis*, above allowance, I will take you from your booke, and teach you another profession: but what else? Forsooth quoth hee, I have a little looked into Musique. How now, quoth his Father, what, art thou mad, to be a Fidler? A head full of Crochets kept never wit in good compasse: but on I pray thee with the rest? Forsooth, quoth the Stripling, I have reade somewhat of Geometry. Oh quoth the Father, I like that well, thou meanest to save charges, when thou hast timber of thine owne, thou wilt not be beholding to the Plough-wright: but a little more. What else? Forsooth quoth he, my Tutor

* 'Be at your silver fork and your pick-tooth': this is one of the earliest references to the use of forks for eating, a fashion introduced into England from Italy. Toothpicks were also a new innovation. Compare Shakespeare's *King John*, Act 1, Sc. 1, 'Now your traveller,—He and his tooth-pick at my worship's mess.'

† Battailing: battel, to batten, a student's account in the College books at Oxford.

was beginning me with Astrologie. What quoth the olde man, teach thee to goe to Tennis with the whole world? No, the ball is too bigge for the best Racket of his braine: but have you looked nothing into Astronomy? Yes forsooth quoth he: and whereto? quoth his Father: to learne to lye in an Almanacke, to cosen fooles with faire weather. But what have you learned of Divinity? Forsooth quoth the youth but little as yet, onely a few rules of Catechising: yea so I thought, quoth olde Twagge. Well, this is a wretched world, to see how new Schoolemen, have a new fashion in their teaching: they were wont to teach little children when I went first to schoole, before they learned one letter, to say, Christes crosse be my speede and the holy Ghost, but now among a number, Christ, his Crosse, and his holy Spirit, is so little taught among little schollers, that it is almost forgot among great Maisters. But leaving spelling and put together, which is easilie learned in a Horne-booke,* let me tell you some-what of all your studies that you never heard yet at schoole, and if you marke it well, perhaps it shall do you no hurt. Begin first with Divinitie, learne to know God, and know all, know not him, and know nothing: Learne to knowe him in his power, to love him in his mercie, to honour him in his goodnes, to beleeve him in his worde, and to confesse him in his glory. Apply this knowledge to your comfort, and be thankfull for your blessing in

* Horne-booke : a child's first lesson book in the form of a block of wood (on which the letters were cut) with a handle. It had a transparent cover of horn.

his grace: know him I say, humbly, love him faithfully, serve him truly, and pray to him hartily, and so in despight of the devill, how ever the world goe with thee, thou shalt be sure of the joyes of heaven. Now, for your Logick, learne to maintaine a truth, and to confound the contrary: For Rethorick, onely learne this out of it, that to speake much in a few words, is a good note of a wise Scholler. Now for Arithmatique, it is not amisse in time of hast to make a reckoning quickly: but take heede, that reckoning without an Hoast, put not thy purse to a new expence. For Musique, a merry hart is worth tenne crowdes * and a Bagpipe. And for Philosophy, it is better to use her effects, then know her secrets: And for Moralities, be not too sawcie with thy betters, nor too familiar with base people, coy to thy friends, nor too kinde to fooles, and with a little observation of times and places, thou shalt be a Philosopher without booke. Now for Geometry, rather learne, and study to purchase Land, then build houses: for it is a cost will soone decay, and titles in these dayes are tickle holdes† to trust to. Now for Astrologie, rather love a Mole-hill of thine owne, then a Mountaine of thy neighbours: and for Astronomy, rather keepe thee in the warmth of the Sunne, then follow the shadow of the Moone: and whatsoever you learne by the booke, be sure to have this alwayes by hart: *Crumena sine pecunia, quisi corpus anima*: A purse without money is like a body without a soule: and

* Crowdes : fiddles.

†Tickle holdes : unstable holdings, tenures.

therefore whatsoever you remember, forget not your purse, I meane your money: for when I was young, I saw monie doo so much in many things, that there was almost nothing doone (I meane for worldly matters) without it. I remember not a mile from the towne where I dwell, I saw a sweet young soule married to a sower old Sir, onelie for mony, & hard at the townes end many a proper man make his will upon the gallowes, and onely for mony. I saw a knave that had cosend his father, loose his eares on the pilary for mony. I saw some drawne, hangd and quartered, for clipping of money. Some misers growe mad to part with their money, and poore beggers starve and die, with lacke of meate and drinke, and money. Why let mee tell thee, if thou doost continue at thy learning, it will paint thy studie, and fornish thee with bookes, it will clothe thy back and feede thy belly, it will guilde thy speech, and give fame to thy wit, make roome for thy presence, and keepe a cushion in thy seate: thou shalt sit uppermost at the Table, feede on the best dish, and not be contradicted in thy speech, but welcome with a world of kindnesse, where wanting the Earths chiefe ornament, thou shalt have a sachell full of holes, a studie without glasse-windowes, bookes without covers, and a thred-bare Jerken without a cloake, thy belly pincht with lacke of victualls, thy head ake with fruitlesse studie, and thy hart sick with griefe of minde, thy welcome cold in most companies, thy place belowe thy inferiours in worth, shouldered of every Jack, and sometimes stand without a stoole: and therefore, if

thou be a Divine, get a Benefice, if a Phisition, get a sute, if a Geometritian, gette an office of surveying, if whatsoever, get mony, and then serve God, and followe what study thou wilt. So the time calling to bed, the old woman loth to wast fire and candle, had shut up doores & away: when the good man with a browne loafe gape,* and a hey ho at the end of it, betaking me to my chamber, got himselfe to his Goose-rest.† Where leaving him to snort with his sow, I heard no more of his good mastership, but in the morning, having hast of my way, taking order for my charges, gave a farewell to the flying Ostrich, which was the Armes of his Inkeeping, faire painted upon the signe-post.

Now trulie Sir, quoth the Angler, I thanke you for your merry tale, I thinke hee was some kinsman, or of his race, that you told me you had red of, who at his death left his sonne such a lesson to looke to his money. I thinke Sir quoth the Scholler, they were birds of one feather, though they lived not at one time: but it is strange to see sometime, what sharpnes of wit a man shall meete with in such a bald noddle. You say true Sir Quoth the Angler, but it is pittie that ever good Wine should come into a fustie vessell: but might I intreate you for one discourse more, of some accident

* 'Browne loafe gape'? This may possibly refer to the hole in the centre of Rye bread, similar to that which is baked in Sweden to-day in flat round disks. Each disk having a large hole in the centre whereby it is strung on a pole for keeping.

† Goose-rest : goose feather bed?

that you met with in your travaile, and so with the setting of the sunne I will take up mine angle, and intreate your company to my poore house, where having been a scholler & a travailer, I hope you will take your welcome with a few dishes. Sir quoth the scholler, for one discourse more I will not denie you, but for my trouble at your house, I must intreate your pardon for this night, to morrow it may be, I will waite on you as I come by you: for this night I am invited at the Keepers of the great Parks, where having past my word, I would keepe my promise.

Sir, quoth the Angler, use your discretion, now to morrow, or at an other time, your welcome is set downe, and your company desired, and therefore I beseech you, while I shall enjoy the benefite of your good companie, let me be beholding to you for your discourse. Then Sir, you shall understand quoth the Scholler, that in the time of my travaile, comming (by occasions) as well into the Pallaces of Princes, as the cottages of poore people, it was my hap, yea I may well say, that under heaven it was my greatest happines that of this worlde I ever founde, to light into the courtlike house of a right worthy honourable Lady,* the desert of whose commendations, far exceeding the stile of my study, I must leave to better wits to dilate of, while I poorelie speake of the little world of my wonder. For in her eye was the seate of pittie, in her hart the honour of vertue, and in her hand the bounty of discretion: to see her countenance, the comfortlesse argued a divine

*The Countess of Pembroke. See Introduction.

spirit, to heare her speak, which was never idle, prooved an oracle of wit, to beholde her presence, might speake of a miracle in nature: to bee short, except Plato, I knew no such philosopher: except the excepted, I meane the Lady of Ladies in this worlde, the honour of women, and wonder of men, the teacher of witt, and the amazer of the wise, the terrifier of the proude, and the comforter of the oppressed, the beautie of Nature, the wonder of Reason, and the joy of honour: the handmaid of God, the heavenly creature of the Earth, and the most worthie Queene in the world, the princely Godesse, or divine Princesse, the gracious soveraigne of the blessed Iland of England: except I say this sun of the earths skie, I knowe not a starre of that state that can compare light with thys Lady: while her thoughts keepe the square of such discretion, that no idle humour dare enter the list of her conceit. What praise can be given to that spirit, that hath so ordered the carefull course of her sences? she doth all things as shee did them not, and useth the world as shee esteemed it not: Honour is her servant, Vertue is her love, Truth is her studie, and Meditation is her exercise: yet is shee affable, with such curtesie, as winnes honor in humilitie: to make an abridgment of her prayses, in a few words of her woorthines, let this suffice, that Nature and Wit, Vertue and Honour, Pitty and Bounty, Care and Kindnesse, have so wrought together in the perfecting of a peerelesse creature, that I may bite my tongue, and burne my penne, lay up my little wits, and wish for more divine spirit, to enter into the conceit of her

desert, ere I further shew my weaknesse, to speake of the wonder of her commendation. But among many good parts, whereof her praise is top full, I will tell you one action, and not the least, that fell out in my time of attendance on her favour: Her house beeing in a maner a little Court, her Lorde in place of no meane commaund, her person no lesse then worthily and honourablie attended, as well with Gentlewomen of excellent spirits, as divers Gentlemen of fine cariage, besides all other servants, each of such respect in her place, as well might give praise to the Governours, where honor setteth rules of such discretion. It might perhaps seeme teadious, to set downe the truth of such particulars as deserved a generall commendation, where first, God daily served, religion trulie preached, all quarrels avoyded, peace carefully preserved, swearing not heard of, where truth was easilie beleeved, a table fully furnished, a house richly garnished, honor kindly entertained, vertue highly esteemed, service well rewarded, and the poore blessedly relieved, might make much for the truth of my discourse, while Envie can but fret at her confession: but least in blowing at a coall I doo but put out the fire, and obscure her praise, that may bee pend by a better spirit, let this suffice for the sum of my speech, that where the eye of honour, did set the rule of government, kindnesse was a companion in every corner of the house: now, to this little Earths kind of Paradise, among many sundry kinde of people, came by chaunce a poore Gentleman in the ruine of his fortune, by the devise of a close conveyance

of an imagined friend brought in, having more wit then discretion, in the nature of a goode foole, to give this Lady cause of laughter: who no sooner sounded the substance of his wit, but with the deepe eye of her rare judgement, percing into the humble vertue of his spirit, pittying his fortune, and perceiving his want, made use of his service in a better sence, and in the divine nature of her blessed spirit, determined the mean of his advancement. With her countenannce she graced him, with good words she favoured him, with her bountie, shee relieved him, and would suffer no man to hurt him: for seeing honestie want maintenaunce, and vertue oppressed with malice, she did not like a helping hand to fill up a halfe penny purse with a poore reckoning, but like herselfe in the absolute power of her honourable spirit, shee comforted the afflicted minde, revived the hart halfe dead, and as it were drawne out of the ditch of misery, sette the spirite in the warme sunne of Gods blessing. Thus did this Princesse entertaine thys poore Gentleman, till by the faction of the malicious, the deceitfull working of the envious, & the desart of his owne unworthinesse, finding in the deceiving of this his bright sun, the sinking of his too happy favour, supping up his sorrowe to himselfe, taking leave for a time, to travaile about a little idle busines, in a cold snowy day passing over an unknowne plaine, not looking well to his way, or beeing ordained to the misery of such misfortune, fell so deepe downe into a Saw-pitte, that he shall repent the fall while he lives: for never since daring to presume, but

in prayers to thinke on his faire Princesse, and living in poore Cottages, to looke towards that Court-like Pallace, he hath gone up and downe like a shadowe without substance, a purse without money, and a body without a spirit.

For ever since, as he hath often told me, if he have come among men, it hath beene like a Faire of rude people, compared to the sweet company of that house, if in the company of women, like a meeting of Gossips, in respect of the gracious spirits of the sweete creatures of that little paradice: and if it chaunce in his weary passage, hee hath had any private conference, with some espetiall bird of the Countrey, yet for all the best notes that ever he heard, they were all Sparrowes to his Nightingale. For according to the dispositions of their minds, hee might see the weakenes of their spirits: as some would talke of nothing, but the new fashion, pinning of ruffes, starching rebaters,* the Outlandish tire, and the long bodies: the fine stuffe and the prettie pinke,† the Lawne shadow, and the cutworke Lace:‡ other of the pyed Cow, the bay Horse, the black Sheep, and the branded Pig:§ another her Malt in the Kill, her Oates in the scuttle, and her Rye in the sheafe, her Cheese in the presse, and her Butter in the cherne. Now with this galimawfrey|| of such

* Rebaters : rebartos, neck bands, ruffs.

† Pinke : cut round holes or eyes in silk cloth.

‡ Cutworke lace : cut embroidery.

§ Branded Pig, &c. : inn-signs.

|| Galimawfrey : hotch-potch.

good matter, as filled his eares with more sound then good sence, must he satisfie his sorrowfull hart, that, when it got him alone by him selfe, with calling to minde the excellent matter, that in variety of methode he had often heard from the mouth of his Minerva, would so fall into a sighing, that had not the heavens the better blest it, it would surely have burst asunder. For say, quoth he, that though some few I found of extraordinary good spirits, yet among a number of these Countrey daunces, I did light on such a Galiard, as had a trick above Trenchmour, and could speake more to the purpose, then many of the wives of the Parish, who having red many English books, could tell pretty tales of idle people, yet compare this Cristall with my Diamond, she would quickly shew her dimnes: and among all other things, if by the revenue of a pretty Dairy, she could privily put up three pence to spend at a blind bridaile, if perhaps in a good humour, she had a minde to pleasure a poore friend; it would come so dropping out of her fingers, as though it hoong at her heart blood: and then perhaps with such a lesson to it, to take heede of unthriftines, with a shrug of the shoulders at the hardnes of the world, that it would breake the hart of a good minde, to thinke on the misery of such Almes.

> To goe from Hives that give the golden honey,
> To shilling Spirits, that will tell their money.

And then calling to mind the golden showres of his Ladies favours, bled inwardly in the hart, with such

drops of unseene teares, as makes him like Adam out of Paradice, hope of no happines, till hee come at heaven: Or like the Phenix, live in ashes, till he may get life by the vertue of the bright Sunne againe: and now this is only his worldly comfort, that she liveth, whom his hart honoureth, and his soule prayeth for, though his unworthy eye, be abandoned the blessing of his sences admiration: Who though he live in the dungeon of sorrowes darknes, will never cease prayer to the heavens for his bright Sunnes eternall blessednes: and that as her name doth live onely in the high Meridianis, so her soule may be blessed in the highest Coelis. Alas poore wretch, quoth the Angler, why doe your eyes water your cheekes, at the shutting up of this discourse? If it be your selfe, be not dismaide, Princes have gracious spirits, and great powers, who at the time of their pleasure will comfort patience in misery: and after the woe of a long Winter, give the fruite of a little Spring, howsoever hope hit on a good Sommer: and therefore continue thy constancie, in thy prayers to remember the happines of thy harts honour, and feare not, but vertue wil one day have a glaunce of favour: and therefore if I may advise thee, let not mal-content breede a madnes, to drive thee from thy selfe to a worse companion. Serve God, and care not for the world: for I am perswaded, that shee that is made of so many exceedings, cannot but at her good time make thee happy in her comfort, who though a while shee shut up the hand of her bounty: yet will send thee a little of that Quintescence, that will save thee from a deadly swound,

howsoever sorrow possesse thee. And therefore be her bead-man in thy prayers, till she make imployment of thy further service. And now since I see the Sunne growes so low, as will scarce give us light to our lodging: let me at this parting challenge your promise, that to morrow you will visite my poore cabine: which with all kindnes that I can devise, shall be alwayes with my selfe at your commaund. Thus with harty thanks each to other, with a few good words of either side, taking a kinde leave, the Angler takes up his hooke, and away they part from the River side, From whence when they were gone in a manner out of sight, a certaine odde Diogones of the world, like a forlorne creature on the earth, throwne lately out of the fortune of his Mistres favour, getting a Paper-booke under his arme, and a penne and Inke under his girdle, in a melancholike humour,* meaning to trouble the Muses, with some dolefull Ballad, to the tune of all a greene willow,† sitting downe on a little mole-hill, among a thick growne plot of Oziers unseene, in steede of his intended peece of Poetry, writ as fast as he could this discourse that he heard betwixt this Angler, and the Scholler.

FINIS

* *Melancholick Humours* was the title of a book of Breton's verses.

† 'Green willow' was a well-known song of the period and sung by Desdemona in Shakespeare's *Othello*, Act 4, Sc. 3.

A

MAD WORLD MY MASTERS,*

Mistake me not.

Or

A merry Dialogue between two Travellers,
The Taker, and Mistaker:

Being very Delightfull, Pleasant, and Profitable to all

* The 1603 edition had not this title, which was added to the edition of 1635.

To My Verie loving, and approved good friend, the lover of all vertues and labourer in good studies, Signor John Florio, *perfect Reader of the Italian language,* Nicholas Breton *wisheth worthy advancement of many good deserts, encrease of comforts, and eternall happinesse.*

UNTHANKFULNESSE is too great an unkindnesse to come neare the nature of any good disposition; and therefore, to avoide the desert of so ill a Touch, to manifest my good will in more desire then ability, I have given you a token of my love, in a little fruit of my labour: wherein if I be not mistaken in my conceipt, you shall find somewhat worth the taking view of. The Dialogue is not tedious, nor the matter so serious, but it may passe the musters of a merry humor: wherein the Taker shall find how he may be mistaken, and the Mistaker, how he may be taken. My hope is you will take all in good part, and smile at them that are so mistaken in their wits, that they know not well, what to take well. But lest I take too long a time, in troubling you with a longer preface, than either the matter requireth, or your patience will admit: with many thankes for your many undeserved kind passages (of which, I have taken such remembrance, as I hope shal one day be better considered) leaving my booke to your kind patronage, and my love to your like employment; I rest alwayes

Your affectionate poore friend

NICHOLAS BRETON.

To the Reader

If I be not mistaken, there are many Takers & Mistakers in this world, who take themselves to be wise with a little wit, & rich with a litle welth. Some are taken for religious, that with their hopocrisie cousin a number of simple people: other are taken for good men, that have a little more wealth then honestie: and some are taken for fooles, that have more conscience then cunning: but happie are they, who take the right course to their soules comfort. In this discourse following, you shall see diverse pretie passages betwixt the Taker and the Mistaker, perhaps as pleasing for the mirth, as profitable for the matter. Now how every one will take it, I know not. The best mindes I know will take nothing ill, that is meant well; and for the worst, they know not how to take anything well, how good so ere it be: and therefore intreating every man to take it as he list, lest I should be beholding to I know not whom for I know not what, I leave to the Printer to take his price, and you to take your pleasure; and so rest

Your friend, if I be not mistaken,

Nicholas Breton.

A MAD WORLD MY MASTERS

Mistake me not or A Merry Dialogue Between two travellers

DORINDO and LORENZO

*

LORENZO well met, how doest thou faire this morning?

LOR. A thousand good morrowes to mine honest Dorindo: but how goes the world man? no newes worth the hearing?

DOR. More then are true, or worth the telling: And therefore I had as leave hold my peace, as have no thankes for my tatling: but I pray thee tell me, where hast thou bene this many a day? I heard that thou hast bene over the water, I know not how farre.

LOR. Indeede the Sea is a pretie brooke to wade thorough, and a yeeres travell will treade a pretie peece of ground: but to tell you where I have bene, I cannot; for my way was long, and my memorie is short: but had I time to tell thee that which I could, (at least if my memorie would serve me) I should make thee like the better of home, and the worse of travell while thou livest.

DOR. And why, I pray thee?

LOR. It is not so soone answered, but rather let me say, why not? For much danger, and more feare, little safetie and lesse gaine, made me wish either to have knowne lesse, or somwhat more worth the knowing.

DOR. I pray thee why? were thine eyes not matches, or thy wits out of order?

Lor. Truely, whether the fault be in my wits, or mine eyes, I know not: but I am sure I was so overtaken in mistaken of every match that I met withall, that I had as leeve almost be an Ignorant, as deceive my selfe with imagination.

Dor. True, for as good to lose thoughts, as to loose by them: but whence, or whereupon grew this griefe of yours?

Lor. I tell you by mistaking.

Dor. But how I pray you?

Lor. Why, the first thing that I was mistaken in, was my selfe: in whom I was the most mistaken of any thing in the world. For, with onely a little observation, I was perswaded that there was no matter of woorth, but I had it by heart; and for trifles, I would not be troubled with them: but, when that reason came to ripping up secrets of wisdomes intelligence, I saw my wit so wilfull, that I was mistaken in all matters that I met with.

Dor. What, men, women and children?

Lor. Yea, onely in them: for touching other creatures, I made no great care of my conceipt of them. But now to tell thee, in my travells how I was mistaken: to runne over all my courses, it were too tedious, let suffice as much as may make thee merry to heare, and wise to remember. First, when I left my Countrey and came a boord the *Buon-à-venture*, we had no sooner weighed Anker, hoissed sailes, and put to sea, but with a fresh gale of wind, and faire weather, wee were so merie above hatches, that me thought there was none so merie

alive as the Saylers. But we had not thus passed five leagues, till the skie was overcast, the wind came about, and grew high, the aire thicke and foggie, and the drizling raine came so beating in our faces, that we were glad to get under hatches: where we were scarcely set in our Cabines, but the tempest grew so great, the winds so rough, and the waves so high, that we were glad with throwing out almost all the goods into the sea, to save our lives in the bare vessell. Now when I came on shore, well moiled and poore, having lost all that I had abord, more then a little money in my purse, which was so little, as that I will say litle of it: I beganne to thinke with my selfe how I was mistaken, to thinke, that one faire day, and a litle faire weather, could make me think, that the saylers life (which every minute is subject to daunger of one harme or other, and betwixt a bord and the water, hath a walke, but in a short and unsteadie roome) should be compared to the land life, where there is pleasure in the faire weather, and shilter against the foule, and no feare of wind nor water, nor many other daungers which I will omit to speake of. And in steade of a whirle poole in the water, a walke large enough to walke man and horse too, till they were both wearie. Now here was my first mistaking.

Dor. It may be, if the weather had held faire, and that you had met with a good prize, you would not have thought your selfe mistaken in the merie life of a mariner.

Lor. Indeed sometime the joy of taking, helpes the miserie of mistaking.

Dor. Yea, but when the theefe that hath taken a purse, if he be overtaken in the high way, and so take the gallowes for his Inne, that joyfull taking in the beginning brings a sorrowfull mistaking in the end.

Lor. Well, as for that part, it is none of my play, and therefore I will leave it to them that love it. Now to tell thee of my second Mistaking. When I had bene a litle on shore, had weathered my selfe, dried my clothes, filled my belly, and emptied my purse, I now beganne to thinke how my wits should worke for my welfare: And first, intending to seeke entertainment of some Noble person, that would honourably look into the vertues, valour, and good qualities of a good mind, I began to put on a resolution to adventure my fortune, and indure any discomfort, that might be a hinderance to my happines. And with this resolution travelling till I was wearie, almost penilesse, and exceedingly hungrie, I came to the view of a goodly, faire, and gorgeously built house, which stood as it were a mile from a Citie neere adjoyning. Now in hope there to find some such person, as I before spake of, I began to rowze up my selfe, as one that had an assured hope, at least of some good victuall, I meane of a good dinner scot-free, howsoever otherwise fortune would be my friend. When, ere I would approach too neere the house, lest I should be seene in any unfit manner, I combed my beard, gartered up my stockings, trussed every point, buttoned every button, and made my selfe readie in the best manner I could, to appeare

before the presence of such as I should meete withall in this gallant mansion. But when I came neare unto the house, and finding the door shut, I did imagine (being about the mid time of the day) that the servants were all at dinner, and the lord of the house either laid downe to sleepe, or gone into his closet, to talke upon some accounts with his ladie: But hearing no sound of any noise, nor voice within of either man or dogge, I feared some ill fortune, that there was some great sicknesse, or danger of death that might dampe the spirits, and so cause the sorrow of the whole house: but staying awhile, and neither hearing any voice within, nor any poore creature without at the gate, that might hope of almes from the hall, I feared the charitie within was so litle, that my comfort without would be according: But after I had stood awhile, loth to loose time, I knocked at the doore: where I knocked long, before I had any answer, and in the end was saluted at a windowe farre within by an old fellow, who it should seeme, to save a groat had slept out his dinner; whose speech (with a wide mouth gaped out) was this: What lacke you? My friend (quoth I) I pray you let me speake with you. No (quoth he) I cannot come downe, I am busie, my maister is not at home, and here is no body in the house but I and my wife, and she is not well: but say your errand and I will heare you. My errand thought I, Was there ever such a kennell for such a curre? doth he take me for some sorie fellow, or hath he no better kind of greeting for strangers? And thus while I stood musing and fretting

at my fortune and this bad fellow, he shut the window: and I with a sigh to see how I was mistaken in this faire house, turning me from it, I met with a foole in a pyed coate, who looking upon me after he had overlaughed himselfe, told me: Sir, you are mistaken, this is a banquetting house, where the gazers are onely fed with conceipts,* for there is not a chimney that smokes, nor a doore open, it is called Mock-beggar, Ha, ha, ha. Now when the foole went thus laughing away, and left me more foole to tarrie there, before I stirred my foote, out of my pocket I tooke my table book,† in which I writ downe my second mistaking.

Dor. Indeed this is too common a mistaking in many Countries, but it may be you might have taken it in such a time, as might have given you cause to have spoken better of it: but indeed faire houses are for rich men, and cottages for the poore: and therefore being in that predicament, it is no marvell you had no better entertainement. But I pray you proceed with your travell.

Lor. I will tell you, melancholy walking a little from this Mocke-begger, I began to frame my selfe to the humour of a cunning begger: when meeting with a grave old man, who by his velvet coate, his golden chaine, and his rich furred gowne, should seeme to be at the least some rich Burgor, (if not some Burga-

*Compare Shakespeare's *A Winter's Tale*, Act 4, Sc. 3, 'And only live by gazing.'

†Compare Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Act 1, Sc. 5, 'My tables,—meet it is, I set it down,' and Act 2, Sc. 2, 'If I had play'd the desk or table-book.'

maister of some City) this well apparalled picture with a kind of life that gave the body leave to cary the head upon a square paire of shouldiers, I in hope to find [him] more comfortable then the faire house maister Mock-begger, I saluted with a great reverence; and requited with a proud nod, I yet adventured to bord* with a few words. When hoping to have found him a man of no lesse understanding spirit, to judge of the estate and conditions of men, then bounty, in the reliefe of the unfortunately distressed, I fell aboord with him with these words. Sir, I thinke you have heard of the hard fortune of the *Buon-à-venture*, who put into your harbor this other night, hardly saving her life, with losse of all her goods, and some of her people. My selfe, with much ado well weather-beaten as you may see, with some few that lie sicke in the haven, got to shore, and am now travelling towards your City here before mee. Loth I am to enter into any base course for my comfort: but, if I might be beholding to your good favour, in this time of my distresse, giving me your name withall, I doubt not if I live, but either by my selfe, or my better friends, to find a time, either to requite or deserve it. He, as one whose heart was so shut up in his purse, that he understood nothing but ware and money, after a harsh humme, or two, gave me this answer: was there nothing saved of her goods I pray you? What was her fraught? Sir, quoth I, it was most silkes and spices, but some pearle, and money, more then would have beene willingly lost. Good

* Boord : accost.

commodities, quoth he; by my fay, a shrewd mischance: I am sorry for ye, I would I could do ye good, but I am now in hast going about a litle businesse, and therefore I cannot stand to talke with you, God be with you; the towne is hard before you, you will be there anon: but, if you have any jewells or pearle that you have saved, I will give you money for it, if I like it. Truly Sir, quoth I, jewells I have not many, onely two rings on my fingers, and this bracelet of Pearle I have saved; my bracelet cost me a hundreth crownes, if it please you to have it of the price it cost, though against my will, I will part with it. With that upon his bottle red nose he claps on a paire of spectacles, and looking on my pearle, found fault with the roundnesse, and the clearenesse, and I know not what else, till at the last, thinking to make a gaine of my misery, he offered me ten crownes: saying, that he had no need of it; but rather then be disfurnished of mony (being a stranger) he would adventure so much on it: whereat, I swallowed a sigh, and concealing my discontent, desired him to pardon me, I hoped to find some of my countriemen in the City, that I would be as bold, as I might withall. Thus, with an idle word or two, did I leave this good old gentleman, in whom how much I was, and many moe, no doubt, have bene mistaken, I referre to the judgement of those that can spell him without booke, and may desire never to come neare him within booke. This was my third mistaking: to take the shadow of a man, and the substance of a moneybagge, with charity, or humanity, by the hypo-

cryticall figure of gravitie, to be a creature of understanding, a man of honour, and a blessed reliever of the miserable.

Dor. Alas how many thousands are so mistaken? Why?, the blessed Saints holinesse, the Martyrs faithfulnesse, the Virgins purenesse, and the prayers of the elect, I have heard, and read of: but I never heard of any rich apparell, or chaines spoken of among them; for God blesse us from it, some say the Divill hath a chaine wherein he leades a number into hell; but I hope it is not gold. I know not that, but I thinke not, for murtherers hang in iron chaines, and therefore he will not be at cost with them, all alike: but how he doth with the Covetous, the Lecherous, and the ambitious, that knoweth God and not I.

Lor. But shall I tell you further of my mistakings.

Dor. Yes for Gods sake.

Lor. Then let me tell you. I had scarcely got within the gates of the City, but that it was my hap to meete with a countrey man of mine owne, and somewhat of alliance unto me. This man at first seeming to be glad to have met me in that city, promising me to bring me acquainted with some other of my countrey men, and that he would be ready to do me all the pleasure he could; this did not a litle content me, hoping that for countrey, and kindreds sake, I should find no litle friendship. But after that he had made me know three or foure of my country men, and brought me to an Inne, where for my mony I might lodge, neither inviting me to dinner or supper, onely was content to

take a cup of Wine of me, and to tell me that he hoped to drinke with me before my going out of towne: thus was I mistaken both in kin and countrey, to hope of any comfort. But the next morning comming to a Tailors house (which was likewise a countrey man of mine) I had no sooner talked with the good man, about the pawning of my bracelet, and taking up of some stuffe for my apparell, but his wife in an inner roome, almost as quicke of eare as of tongue, with a wide gaping mouth came to us with this greeting: go too, goodman-goose, meddle with no pawning nor taking up, you have payed inough for playing the foole, and yet will be an Asse still? I pray you wife quoth he, be quiet: and then to me, truly gentleman, I would be glad to do you any pleasure, but I have such a wife that a dare do nothing without her consent: if you bring your stuffe I will do it you, as well and as good cheape as any man. Now, I that tooke him to have bene the maister of the house, was much mistaken, for the woman ware the breches, and he was to worke for the house: when pitying the poore mans case, and much commending his patience, sory to thinke how I was mistaken, I tooke another course for my contentment. I was not long in towne before I had learned how to turne pearle into gold, and gold into silver, and so to furnish my selfe of such necessaries, as I found most fitting for my use; when there passed not many dayes before I fell upon another fortune, where I was as I was still in every thing mistaken.

Dor. I pray you tell it, we have time inough, and I long to heare it.

Lor. I will tell you. It was my hap after I had done my devotion in the Church, and holy places, passing through the streets, beholding as well the faire houses, as sweete creatures at their doores and windowes; to cast mine eye upon a very artificiall faire, sharp witted, wanton eyed, and faire handed, small footed, straight bodied, and, as I after found, smooth toungued gentlewoman; I say gentle, for she was so gentle, that she was as tame, as a litle Filly, that had bene brought up al by hand. This fine mistresse, I had some hope to do some good upon, when setting a good face on the matter, after a courteous salutation I fell to kissing of her hand: which she endured with such a pleasing smile, as gave me cause to proceed further in my purpose. I had not so soone beganne to go about her, but she had me at every turne, and in the midst of my talk wold be fidling with a ring, in which was a painted Diamond, that I ware on my finger, which she would commend with wishing her hand worthie such a favour. Now I that hoped to have found so gallant a wench, as francke handed, as free hearted, and as liberall for love, as ready for entertainement, found that artificiall beauty, was but a shadow, or rather cover of covetousnesse, or an instrument of wit, to draw on folly, into the ruine of prodigality: so that, here I found my selfe so mistaken, that it made me afraid a long while after, to be busie with the female kind.

Dor. In truth this was a prety mistaking: but if she had bene for you, and would have mistaken you for her husband, by whom you, might craftily have bene taken, and so bene carried to Bride-well,* or payed for your pardon; what a taking would you then have beene in?

Lor. I know not, but tis better, as it was: for as I found it, so I left it. I only spent a few faire words, but not a peny mony, for I would not pay for my repentance: but so leaving her, as I found her, with a *Bazo los manus*, went about my other businesse: which I had not long followed, but I fell upon another mistaking.

Dor. What may that bee, if you can remember?

Lor. I will tell you. It was my hap to heare of a gallant Captaine that was to do a peece of service upon a Citie of the Turks, under whom who could get entertainement, might quickly purchase both honor and wealth. Now, my youth being trained up in armes, and my fortune falling upon such a point, it was not long before I made and got meanes of entertainement at the hands of this gallant souldier, of whom I hoped to receive the due of my desert: but after that he had in many desperate peeces of service employed me, and saw in me that true valour, that made him in the envie of my good deserts, feare some neare pressing towards his pride, in stead of advancing my fortune, or rewarding my service, he still put me upon such continuall ex-

* Bride-well: a prison in Bridge Street, Blackfriars. It was built over a holy well called St. Brides (Bridgets) well, on the site of a former royal palace.

ploits, as threatned everie houre narow escape of my life. But in the end seeing his misery, to make a gaine of those that did him honor, handfasted to the well deserving, and rather plotting the death, then advancing the fortunes of the valiant, got meanes for my discharge from him; and sory to think how I was mistaken in him, as I tell you, I left him: when I had not gone farre, but I light upon another mistaking.

DOR. And how I pray thee? if it be not troublesome to thee to recite it, I pray thee let me heare it.

LOR. You shall.

The mistaking of a Divine.

It was my hap in a little field neare unto a Church in a countrey Towne, to overtake a little old man in a gowne, a wide kassock, a nightcap, and a corner-cap,* by his habite seeming to be a Divine; of whom I was in hope to find that sacred fruit of Charity, that might be some comfort in my returne: whom beginning to salute with a few Latine words: My friend, quoth he, doe not deceive your selfe, I understand not your Greeke. We here, that dwell farre from the Citie, and are not troubled with fine eares to our reading, care for no more but to discharge our duties in our places, I meane of a Vicar, for I am no better; the Parson is a man of greater place, and of faire possessions, who dwelleth a great way hence, and therefore seldome comes into this countrey. I use twice a yeare to bring

* Corner-cap: a cap with three or four corners worn by Divines and members of the University.

him his rent, and perhaps a couple of Capons against Christmusse for my Land-lady, and that is as much as they look for. And for my Parishioners, they are a kind of people, that love a pot of Ale better then a Pulpit, and a Corne-ricke better then a Church-doore: who comming to divine service, more for fashion then devotion, are contented after a little capping and kneeling, coughing and spetting, to helpe me to sing out a Psalme, and sleepe at the second Lesson, or awake to stand up at the Gospell, and say Amen at The Peace of God; and stay till the Banes of Matrimonie be asked, or till the Clarke have cryed a pyed stray bullocke, a blacke sheepe or a gray mare: and then, for that some dwell farre off, be glad to be gotten home to dinner. Now we that have no more living then will hardly serve to keepe a poore house, are not in case, God helpe us, to do any thing for our poore brethren; and therfore my good friend trouble us not with other speech then we understand, lest if you come afore the Constable, he take you for some Conjurer, and so bring your selfe to some trouble, which I would be sorie to see: for truly you seeme a handsom man; God hath done his part in you: God be with you. Oh Lord (thought I) is this man possible to be a Church-man, and knoweth so litle what belongeth to the Church? Well, this was no litle mistaking: but going a little further, leaving this poore Sir Jenkin to his mother tongue, I overtooke a plaine fellowe to my seeming, clad in a home-spun jerkin of russet wooll, a paire of close breeches of the same, a falling band some-

what courser then fine Cambricke, a payre of woollen stockings, and a halfe boote, like a good high shooe. Now, this plaine outside, I guessed to be lined with no excellent stuffe in the inside: and therefore somewhat more boldly then rudely saluted him in this manner: Good fellow, well overtaken. You are welcome, quoth he: but to clappe a man on the shoulder before you knowe him, is a point quite out of the rule of all good manners, at least that ever I learned. Alas, quoth I, goodman clowne, can your nose abide no jeast: Yes sir, quoth he, with my friends; but mine eares have no pleasure in a foole. This touching me too neare the quicke replyed againe: Oh sir, quoth I, then if your friends be fooles, you will shake hands with them; but a straunger will put you out of patience. Hee litle moved herewith, (as it seemed) made me this answer: My friend, I pray you keepe your way, I would be loth to hinder your walke: but if your passion be no greater then my impatience, we shall not fall out for a trifle. But Sir (quoth I) how might I fall in either with your selfe, or such another, for a matter of good earnest? It seemes you are a man of sence, and had I not given you cause of displeasure, which I am sorie for, I would have acquainted you with somwhat, that by your good meanes, I might perhaps be the better for. Truly Sir, quoth he, my estate is not such as can make me bountifull to the best deserving; but so farre as discretion will give me leave, I would be glad to pleasure a stranger. My house is not far hence, but on the further side of this field; whither (if it may be no great

hinderance to your travell) I wil intreat your patience to a pore pittance, and if in either my advise, or better meanes, I may stead your desire, you shall find that you do not looke for; nothing that you shall pay for; and somewhat that perhaps you shall thanke me for: and therfore, I pray you beare me companie for this night; to morrow you shall take your journey at your pleasure. This kind offer (having no reason to refuse) I tooke most thankefully: and by the way after a few discourses of my fortunes, I acquainted him with the resolution of my intent; which was, either to serve in the warres, or in Court, or to professe some trade, or to followe my studie. To which, I asked his advice for my good, in all and every one of them: to which, as I propounded the question, he made me this aunswer. And first, quoth he, my friend, I am sorie, by these your discourses, to have occasion to call to mind the folly of my youth, which taught me nothing in mine age, but the repentance of lost time: but for that I have tried fortune to the uttermost of her malice, and in the end am come to that you see, I would be glad to tell you a merrie tale, how I was mistaken in many courses, before I hit on the right compasse: in which, if you can gather anything for your good, I shall thinke it the best gaine that I have made of it. Now finding this unlooked for and undeserved kindnesse at his handes, and nothing more fitting the humour of my fortune at that time, I intreated him most heartily, to make me in this first to be beholding to him. Whereupon, with a very little preamble he fell into this plaine trot: I will tell you,

quoth he, when I was yong as you are, and had as litle to care for as you have, being broght up at home with ease and plentie, and wearie of welfare, would faine have I know not what, when having the world more at will, then wit to governe my affections, and a desire to see more then I could well carie away, thinking my mothers best creame but bare milke; and others thinnest milke, as good creame as might make butter; taking leave of no friend, and flattering my thoughts with fortune, I would sea forsooth, with a sight of such spirits, as (but that they looked like men) would have made poore people affraid of them: yet these were the men with whom (in the more hast then good speed) I must go lose abroad what I had gotten at home. When, hoping to have light on some good prize, I was taken prisoner with the enemie: of whom being stript of that I had, with a few old ragges on my backe, among a few of my fellow sailors that were set on shore in a poore taking, I found how I began to be mistaken; to leave the land for the Sea, and a safe home for a straunge harbour. But now on shore with my good fellowes in fortune, every man shifting for himselfe, and I trying so many waies to the wood, that I have lost my selfe in the plaine, wearie of doing nothing, began to look about me for my better profit: but such were my crosses in all my courses, that I could never thrive till I got home againe. For to make an abridgement of a long tale, I will tell you: In courting I found more cost then comfort; in warre, more danger then ease; in learning, more studie then profit; in trafficke,

more gaine then conscience; in service, more paine then honour; in mariage, more care then quiet; and in love, more pleasure then vertue: so that in all my courses being so mistaken, that I found a crosse to my comfort in every of them, I fairely left the Courtier to his curtesies, the souldier to his marches, the scholer to his studies, the merchant to his trafficke, the maried man to his purgatorie, and the lover to his vanity: and home returned to my poore cottage that my parents left me; and, as my wife tels me, my sonnes shall possesse after me. Here I live in a meane course, content, and glad of Gods blessings, never in daunger to be mistaken, because I trust only to experience: while doing honor to God, and following my businesse, with the sweate of my browes, I gaine the foode of my senses, with my necessarie appurtenances. O my friend, beleeve me, hee that is contented is rich, while he that is rich is not contented; a litle sufficeth nature, and excesse is but hurtfull; beautie, but the enchaunter of wit; ambition, but the overthrow of vertue; covetousnesse, the corrupter of conscience; authoritie, the charge of care; pride, the hate of nature; envie, the nurse of malice, and wrath, the inventer of murther: sloth, the losse of time; drunkennesse, the shame of nature; gluttonie, the ground of sicknesse; and lecherie the fire of sinne. These notes when I had taken by the light of Gods grace, and observation of times, leaving all extremities, I tooke this meane course: where though home be homely, yet living quietly and contentedly, I find it true, That he who serveth God

hartily, liveth happily, and dieth joyfully. Now my good friend, if I might advise you for your good, I would wish you to take a stayed course, and lay away all running humours: looke home, love home, live at home, a small assurance is better then a great hope; and a little possession, then a great possibilitie: and when a man hath his owne, he neede not borrow of his neighbours. Travell may be pleasing, and service hopefull, trafficke gainefull, and wealth powerfull: but a convenient house, an honest patrimonie, a kind wife, obedient children, faithfull servants, and loving neighbors, make such a commonwealth of contentment in the true conceipt of a carefull understanding; that a king of a mole-hill, were better then a lord of a great hutch. Oh, to see in a faire morning, or a Sunnie evening, the Lambes and Rabbets runne at bace,* the birds billing, the fishes playing, and the flowers budding, who would not leave the drinking in an Ale-house, the wrangling in a dicing house, the lying in a market, and the cheating in a fayre; and thinke that the brightnesse of a faire day, doth put downe all the beauties of the world. But I doubt I grow tedious, and therefore being so neare home, I will intreat you patience till we have supped, and only assure you of a good welcome, to supply the want of better cheere. With this breaking off his talke, he tooke me by the hand and led me into his house, the doore open, as unfearefull of theeves, as unprovided for strangers: where we were at the entry saluted with a modest

* Bace: prisoner's base or bidding base, a game.

smile of a kind wife, humble courtesies of most sweet children, due reverence of comely servants, and a table furnished for both host and a good guest. Here (though no Inne) yet I tooke up my lodging; where with the entertainment of much kindnesse, having fed both bodie and mind with sufficient comforts, with due thankes for all curtesies, I tooke leave of the whole familie of whom in generall I received kindnesse. In the morning not too early, receiving an extraordinarie golden favour, for a friendly farewell, calling to mind his discourses of mistaking, and noting mine owne crosses in my courses: I tooke his counsell for my comfort, and with as much speed as I could, leaving my travell turned even faire home again. And thus much for this time of my travell. Now what say you of yours? for I am sure you have not lived alwaies at home.

Dor. Oh fine tale, you were best mistaken in that man of all other: for, where you hoped well of other, you found the contrarie; but of him you thought but litle, and found much good. But it is no rare thing: for a man may looke like an Owle, that hath more wit then ten Asses; and a woman may bride it like a maide, that hath bene the mother of many children. A King in a Play may be a begger from the stage, and a clowted shoo may have a pate beyond all the Parish. Oh, take heed of a wolfe in a lambes skinne, and talke not of hawking, till you have bene a Faulconer: for if a man have not his five wits, he may be a foole in foure of them. But, lest you take my words for a Lecture,

which may be more tedious then pleasing, I will a litle tell you of my travel, and how I was taken in every corner.

Lor. Yea Sir, now you speake somewhat to the matter. If your taking were like my mistaking, then perhaps we should shake hands for our fortunes. But howsoever it was, I pray you make me acquainted with it.

Dor. I will, and first you shall understand, that my first travell being crosse the seas, I was taken short of my course, and by straunge people caried to a strange place: where being taken for no worse then I was, I was used no better then I should be. But after that I had got out of this taking, I forthwith fell to devise with my selfe, what course I should take for my comfort. And first I would take upon me to be a Courtier, when I would be so gay, as if honour attended upon colours: but wise men taking me as I then was, but a foole, brought me into such a taking; that what with love, and what with sorow, I tooke such passions, as brought me to a weake taking: And yet I was taken among the best for an honest man, and a wel meaning. But in taking my courtly course, my word was so taken in every corner, and my name so taken in every booke, that I grew so afraid of takers, that I durst not almost goe into any place for feare of taking. And to thinke of the sundrie kinds of taking, it is strange to thinke, that any one should be taken up, and taken downe so many waies as I was. If I but courted a wench, I was taken for a wencher; if I talked merily, I was taken for a jester; if I looked sadly, I was taken for a spie; if I

were liberal, for a prodigall; if thriftie, for a snudge;* if valiant, for a quarreller; if patient, a coward; if rich, wise; if poore, a foole; so that they, who knew not how to take any thing as it should be, tooke me to be any thing that they would have me to be. But this was not enough: for if I gave my word, I was taken for a suretie; if I brake it, I was taken for a banck-rupt; if I kept it, I was taken for a silly fellow; if I talked of a disease, I was taken for a Phisitian; if of a case, a Lawyer; if of armes, a Captaine; if of religion, at least a Doctor: so that (as I said before) I was taken so many waies, that I knew not well which way to take my selfe. But beyond all these, not onely my selfe was thus taken to be this and that: but my horse was taken post, my purse was taken prisoner, my word was taken hold of; and what was I, or had I, but was either taken up or downe: my horse was taken up, my purse was taken downe; my word was taken up, my mind was taken downe: in briefe, you could not be more mistaken in any thing, then I was taken for every thing. But lest you should thinke I should chop Logicke with you, or thinke much of my breath in telling a long tale, I will tell you, how I had like to have been taken napping. Going to an Ordinarie to dinner with a friend of mine, who had bene with me at the taking up of a litle money, no sooner we were entred into the house and scarce set downe to a table, short above an houre for covering towards supper, but we were taken up for a rest at Primero:†

* Snudge : miser, curmudgeon.

† Primero : a card game in vogue in Queen Elizabeth's Court.

when being taken for a gamester, I had the trick put upon me, which no sooner I espied, but having got a small rest or two, faining an urgent businesse, I tooke occasion to leave off; for which cause I was taken for a cheater. Which fitting some of that place, who taking me for a fine fin-gred companion, fell abord with me for assistance and advice, so farre that at last, in an assurance of my fidelitie to them, and villanie to all the world besides, they put a sum of money into my hands to go to play with. Which money I no sooner was maister of, but the wind serving well, and I in readinesse to be gone, in the still time of the night, got means to ship myselfe for Roane:* where being a stranger, I was to take what course I well could for my comfort. Where no sooner I was arived, but I smiled to thinke how I had overtooke my takers. Now comming to Roane, and finding diseasse so rife, that an honest Phisitian might set his Apothecarie well on worke, I made a shew with a little Allume and Copresse,† to perswade such wonders of my Art or studie; that who would not give me a good fee for a sore finger? Oh, healing but a Whitloe on a Lords thumbe, and the crampe in a Ladies finger, I went for the cunning man, that had a cure for all diseases. So that there was not a young wench that would not have a child; a young man that was weake stomacked; an old sir that was deafe; nor an old Grandam blind; but would seek to me for remedie. By reason whereof, I came to the knowledge of some secrets, that made

* Roane: Rouen? † Copresse: copperas, metallic salt.

me sought to farre and neare. To be short, I was taken for such a Phisitian, that I tooke no little profit of my patients. But lest my skil would be descryed, and so my profession discredit, I turned all my gettings into gold, which I shipt with my selfe for Antwerpe. But ill gotten, ill spent; ere I came halfe way over sea, I was taken prisoner by a Pyrate, who after hee had taken my goods, kept me in hold for my raunsome: which having payed, and gotten away, take me ever after that what they would, I would take no profession upon me, but taking the world as I could, I would thinke to use it as I had reason. And thus much for my two first takings. Now recovering my losses as well as my wits and fortune would give me leave, I began to take an humour of love, and by a little eloquence and fine dissimulation, to go about (as I took her) a creature of more beautie then wit; and talke, then honesty. To bee short, she was of the doubtfull-gender, the common of two or three scores, or hundreds, I know not whether. Now, this idle-times mistresse I would have a kind bout withall, to see if my wit could helpe my purse in going beyond the wiles of a woman: but while I stood gazing on her leering eyes, she so stole away my heart with a vaine affection, that to tell you trouth, I was taken in love, and that so fast, as that to take hold of her kindnesse, she tooke hold of my cost. For if she but spake of that she liked, if my purse could purchase it, she was sure to have it: so that in a little time, she tooke my kindnesse so kindly, that I was counted the kindest man (I will not say foole) in the world. Oh, I was not

onely so taken, but so overtaken with this taking-mistresse, that she brought me into such a taking, as is scarce worth talking of. Oh, mine eyes were so taken with beautie, my heart with vanitie, my wits with folly, and my purse with prodigality; that had I not the sooner left this taker, I had left nothing for taking. Now sir, being thus wearie of my love-taking, or my taking lover, I began to bethinke me what course I were best to take for my comfort: when finding many malitious people, that could not live quietly with their neighbours, spend much mony to litle purpose, and so feed the Lawyers with fees, that they left their purses with money: I began to thinke, that a litle studie in the Law, would gaine much good in a commonwealth. Whereupon, without much circumstance I got me into the formall outside of a jolly fellow; and for the better countenance to my credit, furnished my studie with more bookes, then I had either time to read, or wit to understand. When having gotten acquaintance with some setters* for Clients, rubbing over my poore French, having *Litleton* before me, and a booke of notes I know not of whose writing, I would set on such a counselling countenance, as if I had bin at the barre, before I knew the hall: when, what with a multitude of Clients and golden fees, I made such a gaine of my dissembling, that nere a Lawyer of my standing, but I caried it cleane from him, man and matter and all. In which pretie thriving course, I had not continued long, but that being found by my learning unfit to

* Setters: instigators.

pleade for a blacke pudding, I was taken for a petti-fogger, and not so good as a poore Clarke; so that my condition being found to be but a practiser with cunning, to trouble the quiet of honest people, for feare of being turned over the barre, I was faine to turne my compasse to another course. But to tell you, during the time of my profession, how honest a man I was taken among knaves, and how contrarie among honest men, I would be loth to have notice taken: for indeed I was rather a bench-whistler,* then a bencher; and more meete (for my good conscience) to be arraigned at the barre, then to pleade at a barre. But as I said before, lest I should be taken for that I truely was, I left that course, and tooke another invention by the back. I got me into a Countrie where I was unknown, and there hoping that men that sought to win heaven by their good deedes, would surely enrich me with their charitie: I began to counterfeit a diseased creature, and seeming with the ruefull countenance that I could frame for the purpose, I would so move the hearts, and picke the purses of kind people, that I doubted not in time to grow a wealthy begger. And with this invention I went forward, till, after that I had so long followed my profession, that my benefactors grew wearie of their liberalitie: it fell out by good, or ill hap rather, that I chaunced to beg of a very neat and handsome man, who seemed by his

* Bench-whistler: one who idles away his time whistling on a bench. Compare Hornby's *The Scourge of Drunkennes*: 'He that will not drinke off his whole scowre is a bench-whistler.'

mild eye to have a heart pitifull to the distressed. But he more cunning to prie into the knavery of my dissembling, then to cure me of my disease, if I had had any, asked me of my paine, and how long I had bene diseased. Which, when I had untruly told him, he willed me to come home to him, and he would undertake to heale me. Oh how glad I seemed of his kindnesse, and promised to waite upon him, with many humble thanks. But fearing this my undertaker should so overtake me in taking me napping in my knavery, I fairely tooke my way out of the towne, and never came within the gates after. Thus was I almost overtaken with a water, before I had made my fire burne halfe kindly. To be short, if I should tell you all the courses that I have taken, and how I have bene taken in every of them, I should make you thinke all your mistaking but a trifle, in comparison of many a miserable taking, that I have bene in.

Lor. Why man, so long as you never tooke any course so farre out of compasse, but you could guesse whereabouts you were; nor ever went so farre any way, but you could find that way home againe: let us take hands together like good friends, and take all well that hath hit well, and warning by that hath falne amisse, to follow such a follie any further.

Dor. You say well, but yet ere I make a full end, I will tell you how kindly I was entertained in a place, that by chaunce I tooke up for my lodging; where being taken as indeed I was, a man of more honestie then wit, and kindnesse then wealth: after good cheare

and welcome, the good man of the house taking me aside, beganne to reade me this honest lesson: my friend, quoth he, for that I take you for a man of that good disposition, that will take any thing well that is well meant; let me tell you, there may be many men in the world, that with mistaking the right course of discretion, runne such wild courses as bring many of them into pitifull takings. Some no sooner come into their land, but they take up their rentes afore the day so long that they are readie to make a newe taking for an old matter: other take money for leases, ere they knowe the value of their lands: other take money for their landes, ere they well know the Summarie of their rentes. All these are commonly taken prisoners, either with the heart-ach for want of money; or the head-ach for want of witte. And for many of them, they are taken either with the beggar, the theefe, the cheater, or the foole. Some when they have nothing to take to, will take a wife to helpe forward a mischiefe, or mend an ill matter, but such a one may hap to take a wrong sow by the eare, that may bite him by the fingers for his labor: another perhaps takes upon him to be a Phisitian, or a Surgeon, and with a pill and a plaister, makes profession of great wonders. Now he with taking upon him much skill, takes much money, and though for want of knowledge, or through crafty villany, he is determined to make a gaine of his patient, he will one day give him ease, and another day torment, as he finds the nature of his purse, in stead of his pulses. Now, is it not pitty, but that such a horse-leech were taken

and hanged, and to make a gaine of griefe, will bring any Christian into such a taking?

Lor. O Lord, is it possible, that there is any such creature in the world, that by so develish a nature will shew himselfe such a dog?

Dor. Too many, but give me leave a little. Some take upon them to be Divines, which only make the name of God a cloke for their knaverie: But those may rather be called lurch-men* then Church-men, who as they are not troubled with much learning, so they have no more honesty, then they may well away withall. But these who take eleven for tenths, and yet can scarce reade any other names, then are written in their Easter-bookes, is it not pitty, but their places were taken away from them, and given to them that could and would take more carefull paines in them?

Lor. I take it so: but there is such straunge takings, and takers in the world, that, if God did not take the more mercy on them, surely the divill would take away a great many of them: but let them go.

Dor. There are other that will take upon them to be Lawyers: and these having scarce read a line of *Littleton*, onely acquainted with a common case, either in the masculine or the feminine gender, will set a solemne countenance upon the matter, and taking money inough for fees, will bring poore clients into such a taking, that, if they perceive not the sooner, how they are taken with the foole, they wil feele themselves too late to be taken with the begger. Now, these kind

* Lurch-men : pilferers.

of injurious privy professors of the Law will take of all hands in all matters, and when they are taken napping with the matter, they take small hearts-griefe at any punishment that doth befall them. Now, is it not pitty that such petty-foggers, as will pry into mens titles, pleade on both sides, and take all they can come by, were not taken from the barre, throwne over the barre, and barred for ever comming more at a bar?

Lor. Yea, methinkes it is a great scandall to the Law. that such an offender of the Law, as so abaseth the Law, should not be more sharpely punished by the Law.

Dor. You say well, but let me tell you a little more of takers. There are other, that if they can write Item for a yeard of Satten, a halfe elle and quarter of Taffety, fold up a piece of Grogeram,* ask what lacke you, and sell an elle of Siprous,† why he takes himselfe to be a Merchant, and that of no meane account in his parish. But let him be, if he can make a gaine of a countenance, he is worthy to live by his wit: but if he can take up wares or money upon dayes, not caring for the payment, till he have enriched himselfe with other mens goods, and upon a suddene take Lud-gate, and pay them with the Banck-rupt; is it not pitty, but that he who so abuseth the credit of a Merchant, should be banished for ever comming more into the city?

Lor. Alas, if a poore Gentleman breake day, in the payment of fourty shillings, the Sergeants will take him

* Grogeram : stuff woven with large woof and rough pile.

† Siprous : cyprus, a thin transparent black stuff.

prisoner, and all the towne will take him for a shifter: but God blesse me out of such takings.

Dor. Well, there are so many ill takers, that it is pitty there are no better orders taken with them, but let them go. Now there are some that take all that comes, till being taken napping, the hangman taketh order with their cloths. Other take another mans wife for their own, that being taken with the matter, either fall into a pitifull taking for their knavery, or make their purses take order for their delivery. All these, with many more, are wicked courses to be taken. But to leave all occasions of ill taking: take a good course, serve God, take a bit at home, rather then a banquet abroad, and water of thine owne, then wine of anothers: take account with thine estate for the defraying of thy charge, take no rent before the day, take no counsell with the wicked, take no pleasure in vanity, lest when you want that is necessary, you receive comfort with sorrow, or despaire in misery: take not a wife without wealth, for it will helpe to hold love; nor without wit, for there is no plague to a foole, nor without grace, for it is a hell to be jealous; nor without beauty, for there is no pleasure in deformity; nor without education, for a slut will be noisome, and a novice idle; take her not too old for conscience sake, nor too yong for thrifts sake; take knowledge of her, ere you love her, lest if you be mistaken, you were better to be without her. And last of all, take heed of a Whore, a paire of Dice, a Parasite, a Pandor, a Cheater, a Flatterer, and a Promoter. Take a Courtier for a fine man, a Lawyer for a

wise man, a Souldier for a valiant, a Divine for a learned man, a Merchant for a rich man: a Clowne for a painefull man, and a begger for a poore man; but for an honest man, take him as you find him, in what estate soever he be: If he be in a great one, give him honour; if in a meane one, give him praise. Now if you find Wealth, Valour, Wisedome, Learning, Labour, and Honesty, all in one man; note him for a rare man, and take him for the best man. But, because in many it falleth out, that Wealth causeth Pride; Wit, cunning; Learning, pollicy; Valour, discord; Paines, griefe; and Poverty, misery: take good notice of every man you have to deale withall, and have to doe with as few as you can. And for an end, if a good occasion may be taken, slip it not; if a good gift may be taken, refuse it not: and if you have taken a good course leave it not. Take God for thy chiefe good, thy wit for thy servant, thy wife for thy companion, and thy children for thy comfort: and what thou hast, take patiently and thankfully. So, shalt thou be sure at the count-taking of all the world, thou shalt be taken into the joyes everlasting. This rule was I taught to take by them, whom I justly tooke, and truly found my good friends. So my good friend, for that I take a gesse of a gratious disposition in you, that you will not take scorne of a small gift of a poore friend: let me intreate you to take your supper and lodging upon my charge, and this peece of gold towards the defraying of your further charges. Thus when I had thankfully taken his kind offer, and further had well taken to memory his good

admonitions, I tooke my leave of him, and according to his counsell tooke my way home againe: where, how happy I should hold my selfe to enjoy your company, I shall make you know by that you find.

Lor. Oh Sir, you have got the start of mee, it was the sute I meant to have made to you: but since it is your fortune to be afore mee, I am at your will to bee disposed.

Dor. Sir, complements are so common, that they be of small account, and therefore I will say but this: Chuse your owne time, and make your owne welcome.

Lor. If I can requite you, I will not forget you, and let this suffice you: shortly I hope to see you, I will alwayes love you, and wish I could ever be with you.

Dor. What? shall we have old adverbs? As in absence you may see me, so in silence you may heare mee? I pray you beare me company home, and I will bring you halfe way backe againe.

Lor. Indeed figures are good among ciphers: but honest minds have plaine tongues, and therefore not to detract time, I am at your discretion.

Dor. I thanke you; Let us goe.

FINIS

CHARACTERS

UPON ESSAIES

Morall, And Divine

*

Written
For thos good Spirits,
that will take them
in good part,
And
Make use of them to
good purpose.

*

To the Honorable, and my much worthy honored, truly learned, and Judicious Knight, Sr Francis Bacon, *his* Ma^ties Attourney Generall, *Increase of honor, health, and eternall happinesse.*

Worthy Knight, I have read of many Essaies, and a kinde of Charactering of them, by such, as when I lookt unto the forme, or nature of their writing, I have beene of the conceit, that they were but Imitators of your breaking the ice to their inventions: which, how short they fall of your worth, I had rather thinke then speake, though Truth neede not blush at her blame: Now, for my selfe unworthy to touch neere the Rocke of those Diamonds, or to speake in their praise, who so farre exceede the power of my capacitie, vouchsafe me leave yet, I beseech you, among those Apes that would counterfet the actions of men, to play the part with learning, and as a Monkey, that would make a face like a Man, and cannot, so to write like a Scholler, and am not: and thus not daring to adventure the Print, under your Patronage, without your favorable allowance, in the devoted service of my bounden duty, I leave these poore Travells of my Spirit, to the perusing of your pleasing leasure, with the further fruites of my humble affection, to the happie employment of your honorable pleasure.

At your service
in all humblenesse,
Nich: Breton.

To the Reader

READ what you list, and understand what you can: Characters are not every mans construction, though they be writ in our mother tongue: and what I have written, being of no other nature, if they fit not your humor, they may please a better: I make no comparison, because I know you not, but if you will vouchsafe to looke into them, it may bee you may finde something in them; their natures are divers, as you may see, if your eyes bee open, and if you can make use of them to good purpose, your wits may prove the better: In briefe, fearing the foole will bee put upon me, for being too busie with matters too farre above my understanding, I will leave my imperfection to pardon, or correction, and my labour to their liking, that will not think ill of a well meaning: and so rest,

Your well-willing friend,

N. B.

AD AUTHOREM

*

He that shall read thy characters (Nic: Breton)
And weigh them well; must say they are well written.
They taste the lampe: much reading, observation,
Art, matter, wit, all worthy commendation.
Some weave their lines of such a slender thred,
They will not last so long, as to be read.
Thou hast so spunne, so weav'd; thy words, thy lines
They please us most being viewd a hundred times.

W. D.

IN LAUDEM OPERIS

*

Words are the pensils, whereby drawne we finde
The picture of the inward man, the minde.
Such thoughts, such words; such words, such is the man.
Say; is this Spirit a Plebeyan?
That like the singing Larke doth mount so high,
We cannot reach them with an earthly eye.

W. P.

While I Essat to character this Booke,
And these charactered Essayes o'relooke:
I herein finde few words, great worth involve:
A Lipsian*stile, terse Phrase: and so resolve,
That as a Stones best valu'd, and best prised,
When best tis knowne: So this, when best revised.

I. B.

* Lipsian : lip salve, flattering speech.

Who reads this Booke with a judicious eye,
Will in true Judgement, true discretion try,
Where words and matter close and sweetly coucht,
Doe shew how truth, wit, art, and nature toucht.
What need more words these Characters to praise,
They are the true charactering of Essaies.

I. R.

In words of worth, to speake of these Essayes
Let this suffice, the worke it selfe will prayse.

C. N.

Some have an humor, that to discommend
They know themselves, they know not how to mend.
Other correct, what they doe thinke amisse:
While in their owne conceit the error is.

But true judicious wits, and honest mindes,
Will give their censure in some better kindes:
And say but truth, that cannot be mistooke:
Wit hath well labourde learning in this Booke.

R. B.

WISEDOME

*

Wisedome is a working Grace in the Soules of the Elect: by whom the Spirit is made capable of those secrets, that neither Nature, nor Reason is able to comprehend: who, by a powerful vertue, She hath from the divine Essence, worketh in all things, according to the will of the Almighty: and, being before beginning, shall exceede Time, in an eternall proceeding: She is a Light in the Intellectuall part, by which Reason is led to direct the Sences in their due Course, and Nature is preserved from Subjecting her selfe to Imperfection: in the Creation, Shee was of Councell with the Trinitie, in the pleasing of the Deity, in the Redemption, the Inventer of Mercy, for the preservation of the Elect, and in the Glorification, the Treasure of life, for the reward of the faithfull, who, having committed to her Care, the cariage of the whole Motion, finding the disposition of earth in all the Children of her Wombe, by such a measure, as she findes their qualitie, she gives them either the grace of Nature, or the glory of Reason: While being the Mother of the Graces, Shee gives them that holy instruction, that, in the knowledge of the highest Love, thorough the pathes of Vertue, makes a passage to

Heaven: Learning hath from her, that knowledge without the which, all knowledge is meere Ignorance: while onely in the Grace of Truth, is seene the Glorie of understanding: Knowledge hath from Her that Learning whereby she is taught the direction of her Love, in the way of life: Understanding hath from her that Knowledge that keepes Conceit alwaies in the Spirits comfort: and Judgement from Understanding, that Rule of Justice, that by the even waight of Impartiality, shewes the hand of Heaven in the heart of Humanitie: in the Heavens, She keepes the Angels in their orders, teacheth them the Natures of their Offices, and emploies them in the service of their Creator: in the Firmament, She walkes among the Starres, sets, and keepes them, in their places, courses, and operations, at her pleasure, She eclipseth the light, and, in a Moment, leaves not a Clowde in the Skie: in Her Thunders, and Lightenings she shewes the Terror of the Highest wrath, and in Her temperate Calmes, the patience of his Mercy: in her frostie Winters, she shewes the weakness of Nature, and in her Sunny Springs, the Recovery of Her health: in the Lovers of this world lives no part of her purenesse, but with Her beloved She makes a Heaven upon Earth: in the King, she shewes her Grace, in his Councell, her Care, and in his State, her Strength: in the Souldior, she shewes Vertue, the truest Valor, in the Lawier, Truth, the Honor of his Plea, in the Merchant, Conscience, the wealth of his Soule, and in the Church-man Charity, the true fruit of his Devotion: She lives in the World, but not

the worlds Love, for the Worlds unworthinesse, is not capable of her worth: She receiveth Mammon, as a gift from his Maker, and makes him serve her use to his Glory: She gives Honor, Grace in Bounty, and manageth wit, by the Care of discretion: She shewes the Necessity of difference, and wherein is the happinesse of Unitie: Shee puts her Labor, to providence, her hope, to patience, her life, to her Love and her Love to her Lord: with whom, as chiefe Secretary of his secrets, she writes his will to the World, and as high Steward of his Courts, she keepes account of all his Tenaunts: in Sum, so great is her Grace in the Heavens, as gives her Glory above the Earth, and so Infinite are her Excellencies, in all the Course of her Action, and so Glorious are the Notes of her Incomprehensible Nature, that I will thus onely Conclude, farre short of her Commendation: She is Gods Love, and his Angells Light, his Servants Grace, and His Beloveds Glory.

*

LEARNING is the life of Reason and the Light of Nature, where Time, Order, and Measure square out the true Course of Knowledge: where, Discretion, in the Temper of Passion, brings experience to the best fruite of Affection: while both the *Theoricke* and the *Practicke*, labour in the life of Judgement, till the perfection of Art, shew the Honor of understanding: She is the keie of Knowledge, that unlocketh the Cabinet of Conceit, wherein are laide up the Labours of Vertue, for the use of the Schollers of Wisedome: where every gratious Spirit may finde matter enough worthy of the Record of the best Memory: She is the Nurse of Nature, with that Milke of Reason that would make a Childe of Grace, never lie from the Dugge: She is the Schoole mistris of Witte, and the gentle Governor of Will, when, the Delight of understanding, gives the Comfort of Study: She is unpleasing to none that knowes her, and unprofitable to none that loves her: She feares not to Wet her feete, to Wade thorough the Waters of Comfort, but comes not neere the Seas of Iniquitie, where folly drownes Affection, in the delight of Vanity: She opens her Treasures to the Travailers in Vertue, but keepes them close from the Eies of Idlenesse: She makes the King Gratious, and his Councell Judicious, his Clergie Devout and his Kingdome prosperous: She gives Honor Vertue, Grace to Honor, Reward to Labor, and Love to Truth: She is the Messenger of Wisedome to the mindes of the Vertuous, and the Way to Honor

in the Spirits of the Gratious: She is the Storehouse of Understanding, where the Affection of Grace can not want Instruction of Goodnesse, while, in the Rules of her directions, Reason is never out of square: She is the Exercise of Wit, in the application of Knowledge, and the preserver of the understanding, in the practise of Memory: In briefe, she makes Age honorable and youth Admirable, the vertuous wise and the wise gracious: Hir Libraries are infinite, hir lessons without number, hir instruction without comparison and hir Schollers without equalitie: In briefe, finding it a laborinth, to go through the grounds of hir praise: Let this suffice, that in all Ages shee hath been and ever will be, the Darling of wisdome, the delight of wit, the study of vertue, and the stay of knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE

*

KNOWLEDGE is a Collection of understanding, gathered in the grounds of Learning, by the instruction of Wisdome: Shee is the exercise of Memory, in the actions of the Minde, and the employer of the Senses in the will of the Spirit: shee is the Notary of Time, and the tryer of Truth, and the labour of the Spirit in the love of Vertue: shee is the pleasure of wit, and the paradise of Reason, where Conceit gathereth the sweet of Understanding. She is the Kings councellor, and the Councells grace, Youths guarde, and Ages glory: It is free from doubts, and feares no danger, while the care of Providence cuts off the cause of Repentance: shee is the enemy of Idlenesse, and the maintayner of Labour, in the care of credit, and pleasure of profit: shee needs no advice in the Resolution of Action, while Experience in observation, findes perfection infallible: It cleares Errors, and cannot be deceived, corrects Impuritie, and will not bee corrupted: Shee hath a wide eare and a close mouth, a pure eye and a perfect heart: It is begotten by Grace, bred by Vertue, brought up by Learning and maintainde by Love: shee converseth with the best capacities and communicates with the soundest Judgments, dwells with the divinest Natures and loves the most patient dispositions: Hir hope is a kind of Assurance, hir faith a continual expectation, hir love an apprehension of Joy, and hir life the light of Eternitie: Hir labours are infinite, hir wayes are unsearcheable, hir

Graces incomparable, and hir Excellencies inexplicable: and therefore, being so little acquainted with hir worth, as makes me blush at my unworthinesse, to speake in the least of hir praise: I will onely leave hir advancement to Vertue, hir honour to Wisdome, hir grace to Truth and to Eternitie hir glory.

PRACTISE

*

PRACTISE, is the Motion of the Spirit, where the Sences are all set to worke in their Natures, where in the fittest employment of Time, Reason maketh the best use of understanding: Shee is the Continuance of Knowledge in the Ease of Memory, and, the Honor of Resolution in the effect of Judgment. Shee plants the Spring and reapes the Harvest, makes labour sweet and patience comfortable: Shee hath a foot on the earth but an eye at heaven, where the prayer of faith findes the felicitie of the Soule: in the fruit of Charity, she shewes the nature of Devotion, and in the Marcy of Justice the Glory of government. Shee gives Time honour, in the fruit of Action, and Reason grace, in the application of knowledge: She takes the height of the Sunne, walkes about the world, sounds the depth of the Sea, and makes her passage through the waters. She is ready for all occasions, attendeth all persons, works with all instruments, and finisheth all actions: Shee takes Invention for her teacher, makes time her servant, method her direction, and place her habitation: Shee hath a wakefull eye and a working braine, which fits the members of the body to the service of the spirit: Shee is the Physitians agent, and the Apothecaries benefactor, the Chirurgions* wealth and the Patients patience: Shee brings time to labor and care to contentment: learning to knowledge and vertue to honour: in Idlenesse shee hath no pleasure,

* Chirurgion : the old spelling of Surgeon.

nor acquaintance with Ignorance but in Industry is her delight and in understanding her grace: Shee hath a passage through all the Predicaments, shee hath a hand in all the Artes, a property in all professions and a qualitie in all conditions: in briefe, so many are the varieties of the manners of her proceedings as makes me fearefull to follow her too farre in observation, lest being never able to come neere the height of hir commendation, I be inforced as I am to leave hir wholy to admiration.

PATIENCE

*

PATIENCE is a kind of heavenly Tenure, whereby the Soule is held in possession, and a sweet temper in the Spirit, which restraineth nature from exceeding reason in passion. Hir hand keeps time in his right course, and hir eye pierceth into the depth of understanding. Shee attendeth wisdome in all hir works, and proportioneth time, to the necessitie of matter: Shee is the poyson of Sorrow in the hope of Comfort and the paradise of conceit in the joy of peace: Hir tongue speakes seldome but to purpose, and hir foot goeth slowly but surely: Shee is the imitator of the Incomprehensible in his passage to perfection and a servant of his will in the mappe of his workmanship: in Confusion Shee hath no operation, while she only aireth hir conceit with the consideration of experience: She travailes farre and is never weary; and gives over no worke but to better a beginning: Shee makes the King mercifull, and the Subject loyall, Honour gracious and Wisdome glorious: Shee pacifieth wrath and puts off revenge, and in humilitie of charitie shewes the nature of Grace: Shee is beloved of the Highest and imbraced of the wisest, honoured with the worthiest, and graced with the best: Shee makes imprisonment Liberty, when the minde goeth thorough the world, and in sicknesse findes health, where death is the way to life: Shee is an Enemie to passion, and knowes no Purgatory; thinkes fortune a fiction, and builds onely upon Providence: Shee is the sicke-mans Salve, and the whole-mans

preserver: the wise-mans staffe, and the good-mans Guide: In summe, not to wade too farre in hir worthinesse, lest I be drownd in the depth of wonder, I will thus end, in hir endlesse Honour: Shee is the grace of Christ, and the Vertue of Christianitie, the praise of Goodnesse, and the preserver of the world.

LOVE

*

Love is the life of Nature, and the joy of Reason, in the Spirit of Grace; where vertue drawing affection, the concord of Sense, makes an union unseperable in the divine apprehension of the joy of Election; it is a ravishment of the Soule, in the delight of the Spirit: which, being carried above it selfe into inexplicable comfort, feeles that heavenly sicknesse that is better than the worlds health, when the wisest of men in the swounding delight of the sacred Inspiration, could thus utter the sweetnesse of his passion: *My soule is sicke of Love.* It is a healthfull sicknesse in the soule, a pleasing passion in the Heart, a contentive labour in the Minde, and a peacefull trouble of the Senses: it alters natures in contrarieties, when difficultie is made easie, paine made a pleasure, poverty, riches, and imprisonment, liberty: for the content of conceit, which regards not to be an abject, in being subject but to an object: it rejoyeth in truth, and knowes no inconstancie, it is free from Jelousie, and feareth no fortune: it breakes the rule of Arithmeticke by confounding of number, where the conjunction of thoughts make one minde in two bodies, where neither figure nor cipher can make division of union: it simpathises with life, and participates with light, when the eye of the minde sees the joy of the heart: it is a predominat power which endures no equalitie and yet communicates with reason in the rules of Concord: it breeds safety in a King, and peace in a kingdome, Nations unitie, and Natures gladnesse:

It sings in labour, in the joy of hope, and makes a paradise in reward of desert: it pleads but mercy in the justice of the Almighty; and but mutuall Amitie in the nature of Humanitie: In summe, having no Eagles eye to looke upon the Sunne, and fearing to looke too high, for feare of a chip in mine eye, I will in these few words, speake in praise of this peerelesse vertue: Love is the grace of nature, and the glory of reason, the blessing of God, and the comfort of the world.

*

PEACE, is a Calme in Conceit, where the Senses take pleasure in the rest of the Spirit: It is Natures holyday after Reasons labour, and Wisdoms musique in the Concords of the minde: It is a blessing of Grace, a bounty of Mercy, a proofe of Love, and a preserver of life. It holds no Arguments, knowes no quarrells, is an enemie to sedition and a continuance of Amitie: It is the root of plenty, the Tree of pleasure, the fruit of Love, and the sweetnesse of life: It is like the still night, where all things are at rest, and the quiet sleep, where dreams are not troublesome: or the resolved point, in the perfection of knowledge, where no cares, nor doubts make controversies in opinion: it needs no watch, where is no feare of Enemy, nor Sollicitor of Causes, where Agreements are concluded: It is the intent of Law, and the fruit of Justice: the end of Warre, and the beginning of Wealth: It is a grace in a Court, and a glory in a Kingdom, a blessing in a Family, and a happinesse in a Commonwealth: It fills the rich mans coffers, and feeds the poore mans labour: It is the Wisemans study, and the Good-mans jouy: who love it, are gracious, who make it, are blessed, who keep it, are happy, and who breake it, are miserable: It hath no dwelling with Idolatry, nor friendship with falsehood, for hir life is in Truth and in hir, all is *Amen*. But lest in the Justice of Peace, I may rather be reprooved for my Ignorance of hir worth, then thought worthy to speake in hir prayse, with this only Conclusion, in the commen-

dation of Peace, I will draw to an end, and hold my peace: It was a message of Joy at the birth of Christ, a song of Joy, at the imbracement of Christ, an assurance of Joy, at the death of Christ, and shall be the fulnesse of Joy, at the comming of Christ.

*

WARRE is a scourge of the wrath of God, which by famine, fire, or sword, humbleth the spirits of the Repentant, tryeth the patience of the Faithfull, and hardneth the hearts of the ungodly: it is the misery of Time, and the terror of Nature, the dispeopling of the Earth, and the ruine of hir Beauty: Hir life, is Action, hir food, Bloud, hir honour, Valor, and hir joy, Conquest. Shee is Valors exercise, and Honors adventure, Reasons trouble, and Peaces enemy: shee is the stout mans love, and the weake mans feare, the poore mans toile, and the rich mans plague: shee is the Armourers Benefactor, and the Chirurgions agent, the Cowards ague, and the Desperats overthrow: she is the wish of Envy, the plague of them that wish hir, the shipwracke of life, and the agent for death; The best of hir is, that shee is the seasoner of the body, and the manager of the minde, for the induring of labor, in the resolution of action: shee thunders in the Aire, rips up the Earth, cuts through the Seas, and consumes with the fire: shee is indeed the invention of Malice, the worke of Mischiefe, the musique of Hell, and the daunce of the Devill: she makes the end of Youth untimely, and of Age wretched, the cities sacke, and the countries beggery: shee is the Captaines pride, and the Captives sorrow, the throat of bloud, and the grave of flesh: shee is the woe of the world, the punishment of sinne, the passage of danger, and the Messenger of destruction: she is the wise mans warning, and the fooles paiment,

the godly mans griefe, and the wicked mans game: In summe, so many are her woundes, so mortall her cures, so daungerous her course, and so devilish her devises, that I will wade no further in her rivers of bloud, but only thus conclude in her description: she is Gods curse, and Mans misery, hells Practise, and earthes Hell.

VALOR

*

VALOR is a Vertue in the spirit, which keepes the flesh in subjection: resolves without fear, and travailes without fainting: she vowes no villany nor breakes her fidelity, she is patient in Captivity, and Pittifull in Conquest: Her gaine is Honor and desert her meane, fortune her skorne and folly her hate: wisedome is her guide and conquest her grace, clemency her praise and humilitie her Glory: she is youthes ornament and ages honor: natures blessing and Vertues love: Her life is resolution and her love victory, her triumph truth and her fame vertue: Her armes are from antiquitie and her cote full of honor, where the title grace hath her Herauldry from heaven: she makes a walke of warre and a sport of danger, an ease of labour and a Jest of death: she makes famine but abstinence, want but a patience, sicknesse but a purge and death a puffe: she is the Mainteiner of warre, the Generall of an army, the terror of an Enemy and the glory of a campe: she is the Noblenesse of the minde and the strength of the Body, the life of hope, and the death of feare: with a handfull of men, she overthrowes a multitude and with a sudaine amazement, she discomfites a Campe: she is the revenge of wrong and the defence of right: Religions Champion and vertues choise: In briefe, let this suffice in her commendation: she strengthened David and conquered Goliah, she overthrowes her enemies and conquers her selfe.

*

RESOLUTION is the Honour of Valor, in the quarrell of Vertue, for the defence of Right and Redresse of Wrong: She beates the March, pitcheth the Battaile, plants the Ordinance and Maintaines the fight: Her Eare is stopt for Disswasions, her Eie aimes only at Honor, her hand takes the Sword of Valor and her heart thinkes of nothing but victory: Shee gives the Charge, makes the Stand, Assaults the fort, and enters the Breach: Shee breakes the Pikes, faceth the Shot, dampes the Souldior, and defeates the Army: Shee looseth no time, slippes no Occasion, dreads no danger, and Cares for no force; She is Valors life and Vertues Love, Justice Honor and Mercies Glorie: Shee beates downe Castles, fires Shippes, Wades thorough the Sea, and Walkes thorough the world: She makes Wisdome her guide and Will her Servant, Reason her Companion and Honor her Mistris: She is a Blessing in Nature and a Beauty in Reason, a Grace in Invention and a Glory in Action: She studies no plots, when her platforme is set downe and defers no time when her houre is prefixed: Shee standes upon no helpes, when she knowes her own force, and in the Execution of her will, she is a Rocke Irremoveable: She is the Kings Will, without Contradiction, and the Judges doome without Exception, the Schollers profession, without Alteration and the Souldiers Honor without Comparison: In summe so many are the groundes of her Grace and the just Causes of her Commendation, that leaving her worth

to the description of better wits, I will, in these fewe wordes, conclude my conceit of her: She is the stoutnesse of the heart, and the strength of the minde, a gift of God and the glory of the World.

HONOR

*

HONOR is a Title or Grace, given by the spirit of Vertue to the desert of Valor, in the defence of Truth: it is wronged in basenesse, and abused in unworthinesse, and endangered in wantonnesse and lost in wickednes: It nourisheth Art and crowneth Wit, graceth Learning and glorifieth Wisedome: in the Herauldry of Heaven it hath the richest Cote, being in Nature Allied unto all the houses of Grace, which in the Heaven of heavens, attend the King of kings: Her Escucheon is a heart, in which in the shield of faith, she beares on the Anchor of Hope, the Helmit of Salvation: she quarters with Wisedome in the Resolution of Valor, and in the line of Charitie, she is the House of Justice: Her Supporters are Time and Patience, her Mantle Truth and her crest Christ treading upon the Globe of the world: her Impresse, *Corona mea Christus*: In briefe, finding her state so high that I am not able to climb unto the praise of her perfection, I will leave her Royalty to the Register of most Princely spirits, and in my humble heart thus only deliver my opinion of her: She is Vertues due and Graces gift, Valors wealth and Reasons joy.

TRUTH

*

Truth is the Glory of time, and the daughter of Eternity: a Title of the highest Grace, and a Note of a divine Nature: she is the life of Religion, the light of Love, the Grace of Wit, and the Crowne of Wisedome, she is the Beauty of Valor, the brightnesse of honor, the blessing of Reason and the joy of faith: her truth is pure gold, her Time is right pretious, her word is most gratious and her will is most glorious: Her Essence is in God and her dwelling with Her servants, her will in His wisdome and her worke to His Glory: she is honored in love, and graced in constancie, in patience admired and in charity beloved: she is the Angels worshippe, the Virgins fame, the Saints blisse and the Martirs crowne: she is the Kings greatnesse and his Councels goodnesse, his subjects peace and his Kingdomes Praise: she is the life of learning and the light of the Law, the honor of Trade and the grace of labor: she hath a pure Eye, a plaine hand, a piercing wit and a perfect heart: she is wisedomes walke in the way of holinesse, and takes up her rest but in the resolution of goodness: Her tongue never trippes, her heart never faintes, her hand never failes and her faith never feares: her Church is without schisme, her City without fraude, her Court without Vanity, and her Kingdome without Villany: In summe, so infinite is her Excellence, in the construction of all sence, that I will thus only conclude in the wonder of her worth: she is the nature of perfection, in the perfection of Nature, where God in Christ, shewes the glory of Christianity.

TIME

*

Time is a continuall Motion, which from the highest Moover, hath his operation in all the subjects of Nature, according to their qualitie, or disposition: He is in proportion, like a Circle, wherein hee walketh with an even passage, to the point of his prefixed place: Hee attendeth none and yet is a servant to all; he is best emploied by wisedome and most abused by folly: He carrieth both the sword and the scepter, for the use both of Justice and Mercie: He is present in all Invention and can not be spared from Action: He is the Treasury of Graces in the Memory of the wise and bringes them forth to the world upon necessity of their use: He openeth the windowes of Heaven to give Light unto the Earth and spreades the Cloake of the night to cover the Rest of labor: He closeth the Eie of Nature and waketh the spirit of Reason, he travelleth thorough the minde and is visible but to the Eie of Understanding: He is swifter then the winde and yet is still as a stone, pretious in his right use, but perilous in the contrarie: He is soone founde of the carefull Soule, and quickly mist in the want of his comfort, he is soone lost in the lacke of Emploiment and not to be recovered without a world of Endevour: he is the true mans Peace and the Theeves perdition, the good mans blessing and the wicked mans curse: He is knowne to be but his being unknowne, but only in his being in a being above Knowledge: he is a Riddle not to be read but in the circumstance of description, his name better knowne

then his nature, and he that maketh best use of him hath the best understanding of him: he is like the study of the Philosophers stone, where a man may see wonders and yet short of his Expectation: Hee is at the Invention of warre, Armes the Souldier, Maintaines the quarrell and makes the Peace: Hee is the Courtiers Play-fellow and the Souldiers Schole-master, the Lawyers Gaine and the Merchantes Hope: His life is Motion and his love Action, His honor Patience and his glory perfection: He masketh Modestie and blusheth Virginitie, honoreth Humilitie and graceth Charitie: In Summe, finding it a world to walke thorough the wonder of his Worth, I will thus brefely deliver what I finde truely of him: Hee is the Agent of the Living and the Register of the dead, the direction of God and a great Worke-master in the world.

DEATH

*

DEATH is an ordinance of God, for the subjecting of the world, which is limited his time for the correction of Pride; in his substance, he is nothing, being but only a deprivation, and in his true description, a name without a nature: He is seene but in a picture: heard, but in a tale: feared but in a passion: and felt but in a pinch: He is a terror but to the wicked and a skar-crow but to the foolish: but to the wise a way of comfort and to the godly the gate to life: He is the ease of paine and the ende of sorrow, the liberty of the imprisoned, and the joy of the faithfull: it is both the wound of sinne and the wages of sinne, the Sinners feare and the Sinners doom. He is the Sextons agent and the Hangmans revenue, the rich mans dirge and the Mourners merry-day. Hee is a course of time but uncertaine till he come and welcome but to such as are wearie of their lives: It is a message from the Physitian, when the patient is past cure and if the writ be well made, it is as *supra sedeas* for all diseases: It is the heavens stroke and the earths Steward, the follower of sicknesse and the fore-runner to Hell. In summe, having no pleasure to ponder too much of the power of it, I will thus conclude my opinion of it: It is a stinge of sinne, and the terror of the wicked, the crowne of the Godly, the staire of vengeance and a stratagem of the Devill.

FAITH

*

FAITH is the hand of the soul which layeth hold of the promises of Christ in the mercy of the Almighty: Shee hath a bright eye and a holy eare, a cleare heart and a sure foot: she is the strength of Hope, the Trust of Truth, the honour of Amitie and the joy of Love: shee is rare among the sonnes of men and hardly found among the daughters of woemen: but among the sonnes of God she is a conveyance of their inheritance and among the daughters of Grace she is the assurance of their portions. Her dwelling is in the Church of God, her conversation with the Saints of God, her delight with the beloved of God and her life is in the love of God: shee knowes no falshood, distrusts no Truth, breakes no promise and coines no excuse, but as bright as the Sunne, as swift as the winde, as sure as the rocke, and as pure as the gold, she lookes towards heaven, but lives in the world, in the soules of the Elect to the glory of Election: she was wounded in Paradise by a dart of the Devill and healed of her hurt by the death of Christ Jesus: she is the poore mans credit and the rich mans praise, the wise mans care and the good mans cognizance. In summe, finding her worth, in words hardly to be expressed, I will in these few words onely deliver my opinion of her: Shee is Gods blessing and mans blisse, reasons comfort and vertues glory.

FEARE

*

FEARE is a fruit of sinne, which drove the first Father of our flesh from the presence of God and hath bred an imperfection in a number of the worse part of his posteritie: It is the disgrace of nature, the foile of reason, the maime of wit and the slur of understanding: It is the palsie of the Spirit, where the Soule wanteth faith and the badge of a Coward, that cannot abide the sight of a sword: It is weaknesse in nature and a wound in patience, the death of hope and the entrance into despaire: It is childrens awe, and fooles amazement, a worme in conscience and a curse to wickednesse. In briefe, it makes the Coward stagger, the Lyer stammer, the Thiefe stumble, and the Traitor start: It is a blot in Armes, a blur in Honour, the shame of a Souldier and the defeat of an Army.

FINIS

THE

COURT AND COUNTRY,

OR

A Briefe Discourse betweene the

COURTIER AND COUNTRY-MAN;

of the Manner, Nature and Condition of their lives

Dialogue-wise set downe betwixt a

COURTIER AND COUNTRY-MAN.

Contayning many Delectable and Pithy

sayings, worthy observation. Also,

necessary Notes for a

COURTIER

Written by—N. B. Gent.

To the Reader

AMONG many Passages that I have met with in the world, it was my hap of late to light on a kinde Controversie betweene two Kinsmen, a Courtier and a Countryman, who meeting together upon a time, fell to perswading one another from their courses of Life: the Courtier would faine have drawne the Countryman to the Court, and the Countryman the Courtier to the Country. The reasons for their delights, and love to their manner of lives, I have set downe as I found them: but whatsoever they alledged for their contentments, it seemed they were resolved upon their Courses, for in the end they left where they begunne, every man to his owne humour, and so brake off. Now what profit or Pleasure may arise by the reading of them, I referre to their discretion that can best make use of them. Matter of state is not medled with; scurrility heere is none: no taxing of any Person nor offence justly to any whosoever: But passages of witte, without the malice of any evill minde. And in summe, matter of good substance, and mirth enough to drive away a great deal of melancholy; and so leaving it to your Patience to read, and to your Pleasure to esteeme of as you see cause: both to Courtiers and Countrimen that are kinde and honest men, I rest, to wish content in the Course of a happy life, and so remaine

Your well wishing Countreyman

N. B.

To the Worshipfull and worthy Knight, the favorer of all good vertues and Studies Sir Stephen Poll, *of* Blackmoore *in Essex; and to his worthy* Lady *Health Honour, and eternall Happinesse.*

Worthy Knight

Being well acquainted with your true knowledge of the Honour of the Court, and the Pleasure of the Countrey: your judiciall Observation in your Travels abroad, and your sweet retyred Life at home: Finding my Service indebted to many of your undeserved bountifull Favours, and willing, in some fruites of my Labour, to shewe the thankefulnesse of my Love, I have adventured to present your Patience with a short Discourse, in the manner of a Dialogue, betweene a Courtier and a Countriman, touching the Lives of either: What Matter of worth is in it I will leave to your discretion to consider of, with my bounden Service to the honour of your Commaund, hoping that either heere or in the Country it will be a pretty passage of idle time with some matter of mirth to remove melancholy. And so in Prayer for your health, and your good Ladies,

to whom, with your selfe, Dedicating
this short Dialogue, I rest
yours, humbly devoted to be Commanded

Nich. Breton.

THE COUERTIER AND THE COUNTRYMAN*

*

COURTIER

Cousin, well met; I see you are still for the Country, your habite, your countenance, your footing and your carriage doe all plainly shew you are no changeling, but every day alike, one, and the same.

COUNTRY-MAN

I am so indeede, and wish that you were so too, for then should you not be so great an eyesore to your friends, nor such an enemy to your selfe: for, I feare the place you live in is more costly than profitable; where, for one that goes up the weather a number goe downe the winde, and perhaps the place not so truly full of delight as the passage through a meaner compasse.

COURTIER

Oh Cousin, you cannot but confesse that blinde men can judge no coulours, and you that live plodding to purchase a pudding, cannot but distast any meat that may compare with it, though in many degrees of goodnes it exceede it: for, should I tell you truly what I know of it, you would soon alter your opinion to a point of better judgement. Oh, the gallant life of the Court, where so many are the choices of contentment, as if on earth it were the Paradise of the world: the

*Compare the discussion between Touchstone and Corin in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, Act 3, Sc. 2.

majesty of the Soveraigne, the wisdome of the Councell, the honour of the Lords, the beauty of the Ladies, the care of the Officers, the courtsey of the Gentlemen, the divine Service of the Morning and Evening, the witty, learned, noble, and pleasant discourses all day, the variety of wits, with the depth of judgments, the dainty fare,—sweetly dressed and neatly served,—the delicate wines and rare fruites, with excellent Musique and admirable Voyces, Maskes and Playes, Dauncing and Riding; deversity of Games, delightfull to the Gamsters purposes; and Riddles, Questions and Answers; Poems, Histories, and strange Inventions of Witt, to startle the Braine of a good understanding; rich Apparrell, precious Jewells, fine proportions, and high Spirits, Princely Coaches, stately Horses, royall Buildings and rare Architecture, sweete Creatures and civill Behaviour: and in the course of Love such carriage of content as setts the Spirit in the lap of pleasure; that if I should talke of the praise of it all day, I should be short of the worth of it at night.

COUNT. And there withall you wak't; or else you are like a Musitian that onely playes upon one string: but, touch the Basse, with the Treble, the Meane, with the Counter Tenor, and then see how the strings will agree together, and whether the Voyces doe not rather faine then sing plaine, for feare the Ditty may disgrace the Note, and so the Musicke be not worth the hearing. But if all be as you say, you take the Evening with the Morning, and all the weeke with the holyday, the sower with the sweet, and the cost with the pleasure,

and tell me then if once in seaven yeares, when your state is weakened and your Land wasted, your Woods untimberd, your Pastures unstored, and your Houses decayed: then tell me whether you find the proverbe true, of the Courtier young and old; though sometime a Bell-weether may bee fat, when many a better sheepe cannot hit on so good a feeding. But since you speake so scornefully of the Country life, if you were or could be so happy as to apprehend the true content in the course of it, you would shake the head and sigh from the heart to be so long from the knowledge of it and never be at rest till you were gotten to it. Oh, the sweets of the Country life, in which are so many and so true varieties of pleasures as keepe the spirit ever waking, and the senses ever working for the full content of the whole Creature, in so much that if [there] may be a similie of heaven upon earth, it is onely in the precinct of the Country passage, where both nature and reason behold and envy that satiety of pleasure that is not easily to be expressed. And to answer directly to some of your points of praise, let me tell you, though we see not our Soveraigne every day, yet we pray for him every hower; and holding our selves unworthy of his presence, are glad when we may get a sight of his Majesty.

Now, for Councellors of State, we reverence their persons, and pray for their lives in their labours for our peace. And for your Lords, we have Land-lords that agree best with our mindes, whom using with due reverence, paying them their rent, and now and then

for some small remembrances wee can have friendly talke withall, and learne good lessons of them for many things to be look't into. And upon the Bench at a Quarter Sessions, when they give a charge, heare them speake so wisely, that it would doe one's heart good to heare them: and sometime in the holydayes, when they keepe good houses, make many a good meales meat with them. And in the time of the yeare when the harvest is in, goe a hunting and hauking, coursing and fishing with them: and sometime to continue good neighbourhood, meete and make matches for shooting and bowling with them, when wee exercise the body in plaine dealing, and not the brain in subtle device.

Now for your Ladies, wee have pretty Wenches, that, though they be not proud, yet they thinke their penny good silver, and if they be faire it is naturall, and having their mothers wit they will doe well enough for their fathers understanding. And for your Gentleman, we have good Yeomen that use more courtesey or at least kindnesse then curiosity, more friendship then complements, and more truth then eloquence: and perhaps I may tell you, I thinke we have more ancient and true Gentlemen that hold the plough in the field then you have in great places that waite with a trencher at a Table; and I have heard my father say, that I beleeve to bee true, that a true Gentleman, will bee better knowne by his inside then his outside, for (as he said) a true Gentleman will be like himselfe, sober, but not proud; liberall, and yet thrifty; wise, but not full of

words; and better seene in the Law, then be too busie with the lawes; one that feares God; will be true to his King; and well knowes how to live in the world, and whatsoever God sends, hath the grace to be content with it; loves his wife and his children, is carefull for his family, is a friend to his neighbour, and no enemy to himselfe; and this (said my father) is indeed the true Gentleman: and for his qualities, if he can speake well, and ride well, and shoote well, and bowle well, wee desire no more of him. But for kissing of the hand, as if hee were licking of his fingers, bending downe the head, as if his neck were out of joynt; or scratching by the foote, as if he were a Corne-cutter; or leering aside, like a wench after her sweete-heart; or winking with one eye, as though hee were levying at a Woodcocke; and such Apish tricks, as come out of the land of Petito, where a Monkey and a Baboone make an Urchin Generation;* and for telling of tales of the adventurous Knight & the strange Lady; and for writing in rime, or talking in prose, with more tongues then teeth in his head, and with that which he brought from beyond the Seas, which he cannot be rid of at home, for swearing and braving, scoffing and stabbing, with such trickes of the divels teaching, we allow none of that learning. Now, if you have any such where you live I know not: I hope with us there are none of them, but I am sure, if they come amongst us, wee desire to be rid of them.

*Compare Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*, Act 1, Sc. 1, APEMANTUS: 'And all this courtesy!' &c.

We have good husbands and honest widdowes; pure Virgins and chast Bachelors; learned Church men, and civill Townes men; holesome fare, full dishes, white bread, and hearty drinke; cleane platters, and faire linnen; good company, friendly talke, plaine musique, and a merry song: and so when God is praysed and the people pleased, I thinke there is no course where a man may be better contented. Now if it bee true (but hope it is not) that I have heard, that in some such places as you live in, in the world, a great way hence beyond the Sea, there be certaine people that have brasen faces, Serpents tongues, and Eagles clawes, that will intrude into companies, and perswade wickednes, and flatter follies; that catch hold of whatsoever they can light on for the service of lewdnes, eyther money, lands, or leases, or apparell; and ever cramming, and yet ever craving. They are carriers of letters betweene lust and wantonnesse, tellers of old wives tales, and singers of wenching Ballads; sweare and forsweare, drinke and gull, laugh and be fat, and for a little pleasure on earth goe to the divell for ever. Now, these in the old time (but now a dayes I hope are out of use) were called Parasites and Panders, Jeasters or Juglers, much of the nature of Gypsies, cunning as the Divell to dive into a pocket, or to picke out the bottome of a purse; but I hope they are all dead, or at least you have few of them about you: if you have, I know not what use you can make of them, but I am sure we cannot away with them among us. I have heard moreover that you have among you certain Evesdroppers, that are tale carriers, that come

among the rooles of Knaves. But for our howses in the Country they are so far one from another, that if we catch any of them about us, wee should carry him before the Constable for a Theefe.

But now leaving to speake more of these things: for pleasures, beleeve it, we will put you downe a world of steppes; for, first of all we rise with the Larke and goe to bed with the Lambe, so that we have the breake of the day and the brightnes of the Sunne to cheere our Spirits in our going to our labours, which many of you barre your selves of, by making day of the night and night of the day, by sleeping after wearines upon the labour of wantonnes, if not of wickednes, as they which worke all day to bring the Divel into hell at night, and labour all night for damnation in the morning: such I have heard of beyond Sea, I pray God you have none about you: but for us in the Country, I assure you wee can abide no such doings. Now for the delight of our eyes, wee have the May-painting of the earth, with flowers of dainty colours and delicate sweets: we have the berryes, the cherries, the pease and the beanes, the plums and the codlings, in the month of June: in July the peares and the apples, the wheat, the rye, the barley and the oates, the beauty of the wide fields, and the labours with delight and mirth, and merry cheare at the comming home of the Harvest cart. We have, againe, in our woods the birds singing: in the pastures the Cowe lowing, the Eue bleateing, & the Foale neighing, which with profit and pleasure makes us better musique then an idle note and a worse

ditty, though I highly doe commend musique, when it is in a right key. Againe, we have young Rabbets that in a sunny morning sit washing of their faces, while as I have heard beyond the seas there are certaine old Conies that in their beds sit painting of their faces: wee have besides Tumblers* for our Conies, and Greyhounds for our courses, Hounds for our chases, Haukes of all kinde for the field, and the river, and the wood: so that what can reason conceive, that nature can desire? but for the delight of both the Country doth afford us. Furthermore, at our meetings on the holydayes betweene our Lads and the Wenches, such true mirth at honest meetings, such dauncing on the greene, in the market house, or about the May-poole, where the young folkes smiling kisse at every turning, and the old folkes checking† with laughing at their children, when dauncing for the garland, playing at stooleball for a Tansie‡ and a banquet of Cords and Creame, with a cup of old nappy§ Ale, matter of small charge, with a little reward of the Piper, after casting of sheepes eyes, and faith and troth for a bargaine, clapping of hands, are seales to the truth of hearts, when a payre of Gloves & a handkerchiffe are as good as the best obligation,

* Tumblers: a breed of sporting dogs.

† Checking: a term used in falconry when a hawk forsakes her proper game to follow other birds that cross her flight.

‡ Stooleball: a game somewhat resembling cricket, with a stool in place of stumps. Tansie: an odorous plant, in this case used for a cake or a pudding in which tansie was an ingredient. A tansie pudding was eaten as a Good-Friday dish down to the present day.

§ Nappy: strong or heady.

with a cappe and a courtsey, hie ye home maides to milking, and so merrily goes the day away. Againe we have hay in the barne, horses in the stable, oxen in the stall, sheepe in the pen, hogges in the stie, corne in the garner, cheese in the loft, milke in the dairy, creame in the pot, butter in the dish, ale in the tub, and Aqua vitœ in the bottle, beefe in the brine, brawne in the sowce, and bacon in the roofe, hearbs in the garden, and water at our doores, whole cloths to our backes, and some money in our cophers, and having all this, if we serve God withall, what in Gods name can we desire to have more?

Now, for some of you, a man may take you many times in the nature of blind-men, that you can scarcely see a penny in your purse, and your lands growne so light, that you beare them all on your backes, and your houses so empty that in the cold of winter all the smoake goeth out at one chimney, when, if Brag were not a good dogge, I know not how hee would hold up his taile. Oh, the fine excuses of wit, or rather folly! late businesse over night makes you keepe your beds in the morning, when indeed it is for lacke of meate to dinner, and perhaps no great banquet at Supper, when a Crust and an Orenge, a Sallad and a cup of Sack makes a feast for a *Bravo*: then after all, a stretch and a yaune, and a pipe of Tobacco, weare bootes for want of shooes, or else that the garters and the roses are at pawne. Now these are no Courtiers, but hangers on upon those that sometimes in great places have an humor to fatten fleas.

Now for us in the Country, wee runne no such courses, but are content with that we have, and keepe somwhat for a rainy day: love neither to borrow nor lend, but keepe the stake still upright, spend as we may spare, and looke to the maine at the yeares end: our meetings are for mirth, and not mischiefe: and for quarrells we have none, except the oyle of the malt worke up into the head and so distemper the braine, that the tongue runne out of order, when a fit of fisticuffes will soone make an end of all matters; so that wee have pleasure with profit, mirth without madnesse, and love without dissembling, when the peace of Conscience is an inward Paradise. Now if you can shew any better Cards for the maintayning of your oppinion, I pray you heartily let me heare it.

COURT. Oh Cousin, I am sorry to see your simplicity: what a deale of adoe you have made about nothing! but I see the proverbe holds true in you. He that lives alwayes at home sees nothing but the same; and your education being but according to your disposition, somewhat of the meanest manner of good fashion, your witte rather being all in Coppy-hold, then in *Capite*, and your learning but to spell and put together, it were hard for you that never studied Astronomy to speake of the nature of the Starres; and therefore I can the better beare with your humour, because it is more naturall then artificiall, yet could I wish you would not so clownifie your wit, as to bury your understanding all under a clod of earth. What! is man but as a beast, bred like a fore-horse, to goe alwayes right on, and

rather draw in a cart, then trot in a better compasse! fie upon basenesse, it is the badge of a Begger. No, let me tell you, if you were or could be acquainted with the life of a Courtier, you would finde such bewitching objects to the eyes, and ravishing delights of the heart, that you would hold the world as a wildernes to the Palace of a Prince, and life but as a death that hath no tast of Court comforts.

Oh Cousin, wee have learning in such reverence, wisdome in such admiration, vertue in such honour, valour in such esteeme, truth in such love, and love in so rare account, that there doth almost nothing passe in perfection, that is not followed with great observation, wher the favour of a Prince maks a Begger a petty King, the countenance of a Lord makes a Clowne a Gentleman, and the looke of a Lady make a groome a gay fellow. Oh Cousin, advancement and contentment are the fruites of Court service, and the steps of hope to the state of honour: furthermore, for knowledge, we have the due consideration of occurents, the disciphering of Characters, enditing of letters, hearing of orations, delivering of messages, congratulating of Princes, and the forme of ambassages, all which are such delights of the Spirit, as makes a shadow of that man, that hath not a mind from the multitude to looke into the nature of the Spirits honour.

Furthermore, we have in Court Officers of care, Orders of discretion, eyes of brightnesse, eares of clearenesse, hearts of purenesse, braines of wisdome, tongues of truth, mindes of noblenesse, and Spirits of goodnesse,

which though they bee not in all, yet are they examples for all, and in the worthiest of all. Oh Cousin, to heare a King or Prince speake like a prophet, a Queene like an Angell, a Councellor like an Oracle, a Lord like a Councellor, a Lady like a Queene, a Preacher like an Apostle, and a Courtier like a Preacher: and then to note the majesty of the greatest, the reverence of the wisest, the honour of the worthiest, and the love of the best, to receive grace from the one, instruction from the other; favour from one, countenance from another; honour from one, and bounty from an other: kindnes from one, and comfort from another; where for the good [of] all, love goeth through all, where exercises of wit are but tryals of understanding, and the properties of speech are the proofes of judgment: where peace in the practise of power, justice the grace of wisdome, and mercy the glory of justice: where time is fitted to his use, and reason is the governor of nature, where priviledges are protections for the unwilling offendant, and sanctuaries are the safety of the unhappily distressed: where the name of want hath no note, basenesse no regard, wantonnesse no grace, nor wickednesse entertainement, except the Divell like an Angell of light come unseene to the world: where the qualities of vertue are the grace of honour, and the breath of wisdome is the beauty of greatnesse: where art hath rewarde of labour, service the regard of duty, nature the affect of reason, and reason the respect of judgement: where idlenesse is hated, foolishnes derided, wilfulnesse restrayned, and wickednesse banished: where wits

refined, braines setled, bodies purged, and spirits purified make a consort of such Creatures as come neere unto heavenly natures.

Beleeve me, Cousin, there is no comparison betweene the Court and the Country, for the sweets of conceit in an understanding spirit, which can truely apprehend the true natures both of pleasures and profit. Alas, let the Cowe lowe after her Calfe, and the Eue bleat after her Lambe, the Asse bray, the Owle sing, and the Dog barke: What musique is in this medley? Let ignorance be an enemy to wit, and experience be the Mistris of fooles, the Stockes stand at the Constables doore, and the Gallowes stand hard by the high way, What is all this to matter of worth? To see Laddes lift up leaden heeles, and Wenches leare after their Lubbers: to see old folkes play the fooles to laugh at the birds of their owne breed, and the young Colts wighie at their parting with their Fillies, when Madge must home to milking, and Simon go serve the beasts: What conceite is in all these courses, but to trouble a good spirit with spending time in idlenes?

Oh Cousin, if thou wert once well entred into the life of a Courtier, thou wouldst never more be in love with the Country, but use it as a cleane shirt, sometime for a refreshing, though it be farre courser for wearing, and little cleaner then that which you put off. I could say more that might easily perswade you to change your opinion, and alter your affection from the Country to the Court; but I hope this shall suffice. If not, I pray you let me heare you speake to some purpose.

COUNTRY. Say, quoth you! Let me tell you, that all that you have said, or I thinke you can say, doth, nor will worke any more with my witte to incline my humour to your will, then a Pill that lyeth in the Stomacke, and more offends nature then purgeth humour: for, where there is no corruption Phisicke hath nothing to worke upon, except by the trouble of nature, to bring health into sicknes. Doe you thinke so much of your strength as to remove a Mil-stone with your little finger: or are you so perswaded of your wit, that with a word of your mouth you can take away the strength of understanding? No such matter, no hast but good: I pray you give me leave a little, and if I speake not to your purpose, I will speake to mine owne: and I will say as one Dante, an Italian Poet, once said in an obscure Booke of his, Understand me that can, I understand my selfe: And though my Country booke be written in a rough hand, yet I can read it and picke such matter out of it as shall serve the turne for my instruction. What is here to do in perswading you know not what? to talke you care not how? Is this Court eloquence? Is not the Clownyfying of wit the Foolifying of understanding? Home spunne cloth is not worth the wearing, water is a cold drinke, and simplenesse is but basenesse, and a Clowne is but a rich Begger. Now truly, Cousin, you are quite out: for, let me tell you that good words and good deeds are the best tryals of good minds, and make the best passages among the best people: and so much for this matter.
Now to answer your proverbs, and as I can remember,

most points of your discourses: First, let me tell you, that I hold it better to see something of mine owne at home, then travell so farre that I see nothing of mine owne abroad, for I have heard that roling stones gather no mosse. And for my education, if it hath been simple, and my disposition not subtle, if I be not fashioned according to the world, I shall bee the fitter for heaven: And for my wit, to deale truly with you, I had rather hold it in a Coppy of a good Tenure, then by the title of an idle braine to keepe a fooles head in Freehold. Now for my learning, I hold it better to spell and put together, then to spoile and put asunder: but there are some that in their Child-hood are so long in their horne booke,* that doe what they can, they will smell of the Baby till they cannot see to read. Now we in the Country beginne and goe forward with our reading in this manner, Christs Crosse be my speed, and the Holy Ghost: for feare the Divell should be in the letters of the Alphabet, as hee is too often when hee teacheth old fellowes play tricks with their Creditors, who in stead of payments, write I O U, and so scoffe many an honest man out of his goods.

And againe, when he teacheth travellors that have taken a surfet in the Low-countries to set downe H†

* Horne booke: a child's first lesson book in the form of a block of wood (on which the letters were cut) with a handle. It had a transparent cover of horn.

† H: this letter is a pun on the word 'ache' which was pronounced with a soft 'ch.' Compare Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, Act 3, Sc. 4, BEAT.: 'I am exceeding ill. Heighho!' MARG.: 'For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?' BEAT.: 'For the letter that begins them all, H.'

and O, to expresse the nature of their griefe, and to jeast out the time with B and R, or to bite mens good names with those letters to avoyde actions of slander, and when they write you R, and they B. Oh fine knackes of more wit then honesty: but I hope there are none of these among you. But I have heard my father say, that when he was young, hee saw many such in such places as you live in, but it was a great way hence beyond the salt water.

Now for Astronomy, I thinke it be fallen from the height that it was in former time, for Starres were wont to bee in the heavens: now Gallants hang upon their heeles, so bright in their Spurres as if they were all young Phaetons, that would ride Phoebus horses, while the folly of pride should sit in the Chaire of ruine: but let them sit fast when they are up, least they breake their neckes in their falls.

Now for your Nature and Art, I thinke better of a naturall Art, then an artificiall Nature. And for your fore-horse pace right on, I hope he is better than a resty Jade that will not stir out of the Stable, or a Kicking Curtall* that will sette his Ryder beside the Saddle; and better draw soundly in a cart then be lamed in a coach, or be sicke in a Foote-cloth: & better a true trot then a fidling amble. But let these humors passe.

Now for your bewitching objects, I doubt they will make objects of Subjects, and therefore I love no such divelish devises, when womens eyes will bewitch mens hearts, and the breath of Tongues will poison a mans

* Curtall: a horse with a docked tail.

wits. And for your ravishing delights, it is a word that I well understand not, or at least, as I have heard, this ravishing is a word that signifieth robbing wenches of the inner lining of their linnen against their wills; and if it be so, it is a perilous delight that brings a man to the Gallowes, if not to the Divell, for a little fit of pleasure: but if there be any better sense in it, I would be glad to understand it, though at this time I care not to be troubled with it.

Now for Princes Pallaces, they are too high buildings for our Brickes; plaine people are content with Cottages, and had rather pay tributes to their maintenance, then have them too much in our view, for blinding of our eies with their golden brightnes. Now for life and death, hee that lives at quiet and will not be contented, may change for the worse and repent it, when he cannot helpe it. Oh Cousin, I have heard my father say, that it is better to sit fast, then to rise and fall, and a great wise man that knew the world to a hayre, would say, that the meane was sure: better be in the middle room, then either in the Garret or the Sellor: and another of an excellent worlds wit, that ranne the ring with him in the walke of the world, would say, that honour was but ancient riches, and in high places, where frownes are deadly, and favours are uncertaine, there was more feare of the one, then hope of the other: and a laborious weekes wages well payde was better then a yeares hope in paper: and therefore, hee that would leave possessions for promises, and assurances for hope, were more full of wit then understanding,

and of conceipt then judgement, for though there is no service to the King, nor no fishing to the Sea, yet there are so many suitors for rewards, and so many beaters of the water, that delayes may be cold comforts of long hopes to the one, and the other angle all day and catch a Gudgion at night: and therefore, though the world be like a Well with two Buckets, that when one falleth, another riseth, yet the fall is much swifter then the rysing, and good reason, because the one goes downe empty and the other comes up laden. But to be plaine, I have so long beene used to a quiet life, that I would not leave it for a world.

Now for your notes of worth that you have set downe in your Court commendations; I allow that all may bee true, and they that thrive in it may thinke well of it, and hold it a kind of heaven upon earth: but for my selfe, I remember certaine notes that I reade in a Booke of my Fathers owne writing that shall goe with me to my grave; there were not many, but in my mind to good purpose: as first for greatnes, My minde to me a Kingdome is:* so that the quiet of the minde is a greater matter then perhaps many great men possesse. Then for wealth, Godlines is great riches to him that is content with that hee hath, which many great men sometime perhaps have lesse then meaner people. Then for a good rule of life; Feare God, and obey the King: which perhaps some doe not so well in the Court as the Country. Then for the course of the Law, Love God

* 'My mind to me a kingdom is' was a well-known song, the words by Sir Edward Dyer and the music by Byrde.

above all, and thy neighbour as thy selfe: which if you doe in the Court as wee doe in the Country, Envy would worke no hatred, nor malice mischiefe: but love in all persons would make a pallace, a Paradise, which in the best is more evident, then in the meanest apprehended: but God, whose love is the life of all, breed such love in the lives of all, that peace may ever live among all.

Now for learning, what your neede is thereof I know not, but with us, this is all we goe to schoole for: to read common Prayers at Church, and set downe common prises at Markets; write a Letter, and make a Bond; set downe the day of our Births, our Marriage day, and make our Wills when we are sicke, for the disposing of our goods when we are dead: these are the chiefe matters that we meddle with, and we find enough to trouble our heads withall, for if the fathers knowe their owne children, wives their owne husbands from other men, maydens keepe their by your leaves from subtle batchelors, Farmers know their cattle by the heads, and Sheepheards know their sheepe by the brand, What more learning have we need of, but that experience will teach us without booke? We can learne to plough and harrow, sow and reape, plant and prune, thrash and fanne, winnow and grinde, brue and bake, and all without booke; and these are our chiefe businesse in the Country, except we be Jury-men to hang a theefe, or speake truth in a mans right, which conscience & experience wil teach us with a little learning: then what should we study for, except it were

to talke with the man in the Moone about the course of the Starres? No, Astronomy is too high a reach for our reason, we will rather sit under a shady tree in the Sunne to take the benefit of the cold ayre, then lye and stare upon the Starres to marke their walke in the heavens, while wee loose our wits in the Cloudes: and yet we reverence learning as well in the Parson of our parish, as our Schoole-master, but chiefely, in our Justices of peace, for under God and the King they beare great sway in the Country. But for great learning, in great matters, and in great places wee leave it to great men. If wee live within the compasse of the Law, serve God and obey our King, and as good Subjects ought to doe, in our duties and our prayers dayly remember him, What neede we more learning?

Now for wisdome, I heard our Parson in our Church read it in the holy Booke of God, That the wisdome of the world is but foolishnes before God: And why then should a man seeke to befoole himselfe before God, with more wit then is necessary for the knowledge of the world? The wise man must die as well as the foole, and when all are the Sonnes of Adam, wee have a faire warning to bee too busie with tasting of the Tree of too much knowledge. I have read in the Booke of the best wisdome, that the feare of God is the beginning of wisdome, and surely, he that begins his lesson there may continue his learning the better, and come to bee a good Scholler at last. Salomon, the wisest man that ever was, said, that all was vanity and vexation of the

Spirit: and why then should a man vex his spirit with seeking to be as wise as a Woodcocke, in beating his braines to get the possession of vanity? And yet I must confesse, that least vanity turne to villanie, it is good that the authority of wisdome have power to bridle the folly of selfe will. But for the great wisdome of Councellors of State, Judges of Lawes, Governours of Citties, Generals of Armies, or such great People in such great places, they go so farre beyond our wits, that wee had rather be obedient to their wills, then enter into the depth of their discretions, and content our selves with that wisdome which is most necessary for us, to love God above all, & our neighbours as our selves, to rise with the day raies, and goe to bed without a candle, to eate when we are hungry, drinke when wee are thirsty, travell when we are lusty, and rest when we are weary: feare God, be true to the Crowne, keepe the lawes, pay scot and lot, breed no quarrels, doe no wrongs, and labour all we may to have peace, both with God and man: speake truth and shame the Divell: pitch and pay, say and hold, trye and trust, believe no lies, tell no newes: decive not an enemy, nor abuse a friend, make much of a little and more as it may increase: These are the points of wisdome that we runne the course of our Card by.

Now for valour, it is seene best in the best quarrells, and Saint Paul said, that hee had fought the good fight, to fight for the preservation of a state, the Person of a King or Prince, to keepe my house from thieves, my children from dogs, and my family from famine, and

my faith from fainting in the word of God, this hold we the good fight, and the true valour: not to stand upon puntos,* not to endure a lye without death, challenge for a frowne, and kill for a fowle word, adventure all for nothing, or perhaps worse then nothing, loose lands, goods, life and soule and all in a murther or a bloody bargaine, to please a Punke,† and to be counted a Captain of the Divels army, or a Gallant of the damned crew, except some few howers before his end, while the worme of Conscience bites him at the heart, a sparke of grace enter into his soule, and make him at the Gallowes make a repentant rehearsall of a lewd life, and leave a fayre example at his death, to all behoulders, perhaps with these good words at his departing, All yee that heere bee, take example to be hangd by me.

Oh brave valour that makes many a weeping eye, when my mother for my sonne and my sister for my brother, or my wife for my husband, or my father for my daughter, or mine uncle for mine aunt, sit and howle like dogs to see the workes of the Divel, in the wicked of the world. Such kinde of valour I have heard my father say that he hath markt in some places where he hath travel'd, I know not where, a great way hence when he was young, where he found among a hellish company of accursed spirits, they were called valliant fellowes, that durst say any thing, doe any thing, or be any thing, till they were worse then nothing: durst

* Puntos: points, a term used in fencing, punctilios.

† Punke: a whore.

quarrell with any man, abuse any man, strike any man, kill any man, and care for no man, durst prate, lye, sweare and forsweare, scoffe and swagger, drinke and dice, drab and stab, durst be hang'd and damn'd for a horrible fit of a franticke humour, and this was their valour. I pray God there be none such among yee where you keepe, I am sure there keepe none such among us.

Now for truth, I hope there are more true hearts in the Country then there are tongues in the City in many places, yea, and in greater places then I will speake of, but where they be, God blesse them, and where they are not, God send them, and that is all that I say to them. But for ought I see there is so much falshood in the world that I feare there is little truth on the earth: and in great places where protestations are without performances, and excuses are better then lies, Where is either truth of love or love of truth? but a little, I thinke: I would there were more. But with us, truth is so beloved, that a Lyer is held little better then a theefe, and it is a lesson we learne our little Children, speake truth, tell truth, take heed you lie not, the Divell is the father of lies, and little better be his Children, deale truly with all men, let your tongues and your hearts goe together, Christ is truth, in his holy name be true, ever tell truth and shame the Divell, be true to God in your beliefe and obedience to his word, bee true to your King in the loyalty of your hearts, bee true to your wives in the honesty of your bodies, and be true to your friends in performing your promises: this is

the love we have to truth, if you have it so, it is a good blessing of God and makes a happy people.

And for love, if it bee in the world, I thinke it is in the Country, for where envy, pride, and malice, and jealousie makes buzzes in mens braines, what love can bee in their hearts, howsoever it slip from their tongues? No, no, our Turtles ever flie together, our Swannes ever swimme together, and our lovers live and die together. Now if such love be among you, it is worthy to be much made of, but if you like to day and loath to morrow, if you fawne to day and frowne to morrow, if all your love be to laugh and lye downe, or to hope of gaine or reward, that is none of our love. Wee love goodnes and onely for goodnes: first God, then our selves, then our wives and children, then our family, and then our friends: and so hath love his course in our lives: and therefore if there be any observation in affection, I pray you, let it bee rather in the Country then in any place, where faith is not so fast, but fancy can alter love upon a little humour of dislike.

Now for your favour, when one Begger growes rich by it, how many rich grow beggers through the hope of fortune: and therefore in my minde, better be Lord over a little of a mans owne, then to follow a Lord for the bare name of a Gentleman, and better with a little to bee counted a good man, then with gaping after Gudgions to be thought, I know not what. Truly, Cousin, I thinke every little is best in his owne nature, as one bred, so let him bee: for as a Courtier cannot hold the plough, but he wil be soone seene to be no

workman, so a Country-man cannot court it, but hee wil shewe in somewhat from whence he comes.

And for a Ladies look, I thinke wee have wenches in the Country that have as faire eyes as finer creatures, who when they lift to looke kindly, will make many glad though few gay fellowes. And for apparell, plaine russet is our wearing, while pied coats among us we account players or fooles, except they be better men then the best of our parish, except our Landlord.

Now for preferment and advancement, they be encouragements to some Spirits that are borne under the climing climate, but for mine owne part I love not to play the flye with a Candle, for feare of burning my wings, but will leave the ladder of honour to him that best knowes how to climbe, and to sit fast when he is up. Now for your Occurrents, what are they but newes, sometime true and some time false, which when they come to us they are commonly more costly then comfortable, and therefore wee desire not to trouble our selves? Now for disciphering of Characters, I have heard my father say in the old time, that they were accounted little better then conjurations, in which were written the names of Divels that the Colledge of Hel used to conjure up in the world, and belong'd onely to the study of Sorcerers, Witches, Wisards, and such wicked wretches, as not caring for the plaine word of God, goe with scratches of the Divels clawes into hell. But how true it is God knoweth: but that this is true, every man knoweth that it was a devise of the Divell at the first, to put into the head of a deceiving heart

that having no true nor plaine meaning in conscience, would write so, that no man should understand him but himselfe, or like himselfe, and onely to hoodwinke the world for looking into his wickednesse. But what is the end of all wily beguily? seeking to decive other, deceiv'd himselfe most of all. Now letters of darkenes devised by the Divell for the followers of his designes in the courses of his deceipt: honest men in the Country love to meddle with no such matters, but so far as may be to Gods glory and the good of a State, to find out the plots, and to prevent the mischiefe of a villanie, being done in Gods holy name and by his grace, I hold it a fine quality to discipher a Character, and lay open a knave: But for us in the Country, wee love no such braine-labours as may bring our wits into such a wood, that we know not how to get out of it. Now for enditing of Letters: alas, what neede wee much adoe about a little matter? If we can write, wee commonly begin and end much after one manner: Trusting in God you are in good health, with all our friends: and so to the matter, either to borrow or to pay, or to know the prise of your Cattell, or for a merry meeting, or I thanke you for my good cheere. And so with my hearty commendations, I commit you to God. From my house such a day. Your loving friend to his power. And then seale up the paper, and write on the outside: To my loving Cousin, Neighbour, or Friend, at his house in such a place, with speed, if the time require, and so no more adoe. Except it bee a Love Letter, and then a few idle words of,

Sweete heart, I commend me unto you, and have beene as good as my promise, and have sent you a paire of gloves by Meg your Brothers best beloved, and upon Friday (God willing) I will meete you at the Market, and wee will be merry, and talke further of the matter, and if you be as I am, say and hold, I know my portion, and when yours is put to it wee shall live the better. And so, keeping your Handkerchiffe neere my heart: till I see you, I rest

Yours during life in true love

W. T.

Now for your Stiles of honour and worship to this Lord and that Lady on the outside, and a deale of humility and ceremony on the inside, me thinkes it is a wearying of the minde before you come to the matter. And as I remember a great wise man that would dispatch many matters in little time, would thus ever read Letters, in the beginning two words for the Stile, and other two at the end for the conclusion, so noting the treble above, and the base beneath, he would soone in the middest find the substance of the Musique: and to tell truth, few words and plaine, and to the purpose, is better for our understanding, then to goe about with words to tell a long tale to little end.

Now if we cannot write, we have the Clerke of the church, or the Schoolemaster of the towne to help us, who for our plaine matters will serve our turnes wel enough, and therefore what neede wee trouble our heads with enditing of Letters?

Now, for Orations, they are fittest for Schollers to allure an audience to attendance: but for us, we have more use of our hands to worke for our livings, then of our eares to heare the sound of a little breath. Yet I allow it among you in such places as you live in: but where truth is the best eloquence, we make but two words to a bargaine, and therefore for your long discourses, we desire not to be wearied with them, but will leave them to you that have more use of them, and have time to hearken to them.

Now for your Messages, alas, cannot we give a Cap and make a Legge to our betters, and deliver our minds in few words, without we learne to looke downe as though we were seeking of a Rabbetts nest, or that we had committed some such fault that we were ashamed to shew our faces, or make a long congie as though we were making preperation to a Galliard,* when if a foote slip we may have a disgrace in the fall, and if a word be misplaced, it is halfe a marring to all the matter: and therefore for messages, our matters being not great, small instructions wil serve our turnes for the delivery of our minds.

Now for congratulating of Princes, God blesse them, they are too great men for us, more then to pray for them, and their matters too high for our reason to reach after, it is enough for us to give a Cake for a Pudding, and a pint of Wine for a pottle of Beere: and when we kill Hogs to send our Children to our neighbours with these messages : My Father and my Mother have sent

* Galliard: a gay sprightly dance.

you a Pudding and a Chine, and desires when you kill your hogges, you will send him as good againe. Now for great folkes, they have such great choyce of presents, and of such great charge, and such great care in the delivery of them, that (Lord have mercy upon us) wee in the country cannot tell what to say unto them, but, God blesse them that have them, and much good may they doe them.

Now for Ambassages and Ambassadors, wee know not what the word meanes and therefore little care to be troubled with the men, for when we heare of any man that comes from a strange Country, wee say, I pray God he comes for good, and then hee is the better welcome: Tush, talke to us of a Basket or a Basket-maker, and not of an Ambassador nor Ambassages, but make your selves, that best know the meaning of them, the best use you can of them, for us wee care not to looke after them, more then to pray for them, that as they doe, or as they meane, so God blesse them.

Now for your Officers, their charge is so great, that wee desire not their places, for we hold a private quiet better then a publike trouble: and a cleane conscience worth a world of wealth. Now for your Orders, perhaps your need of them is great, where disorders may be grievous: for us in the Country, we have few, but in the Churches for our Seates, and at our meetings for our places, where, when Maister Justice and the high Constables are set, honest men, like good fellows, will sit togeither, except at a Sessions or an Assise wee bee

called upon a Jury, then as it pleaseth the Clerk of the Peace, set one afore another, and therefore for orders what neede we trouble our selves with other then we are usd unto? I remember I have heard my father tell of a world of orders hee had seene in divers places, where he had travel'd, where right good Gentlemen, that had followed great Lords and Ladies had enough to doe to study orders in their Service: a Trencher must not be laid, nor a Napkin folded out of order, a dish set downe out of order, a Capon carved, nor a Rabbet unlaced out of order, a Goose broken up, nor a Pasty cut up out of order, a Glasse filled, nor a Cup uncovered nor delivered out of order, you must not stand, speake, nor looke out of order: which were such a busines for us to goe about, that we should be all out of time ere we should get into any good order. But in that there is difference of places, and every one must have their due. It is meete for good manners to keepe the rules of good orders. But how much more at rest are we in the Country that are not troubled with these duties?

Now for your eyes of brightnesse, I feare you are not troubled with too many of them: late sitting up, long watching, and night busines, as writings, readings, casting up of accounts, long watchings, and such like other busines, besides gaming, playing at Cards, Tables and Dice, or such sports as spend time, are all dangerous for weake sights, and make a world of sore eies. But as you said, some of the best sort are wiser in their actions, and more temperate in their motions, and

therefore keep their sights in more perfection, which may be examples to others, if they have the grace to follow them. But for our eies if we doe not hurt them with a stripe of a twig in the wood, a flye in the ayre, or a mote in the Sunne, our eyes are as bright as christall, so that we can se the least thing that may doe us good, and if we can see the Sunne in the morning and the Moone at night, see our Cattell in our pastures, our sheepe in the Common, our Corne in the fields, our houses in repaire, and our money in our purses, our meate on our tables, and our wines with our Children, and looke up to heaven, and give God thankes for all, wee seeke no better sight.

Now for the cleannes of your hands, I feare that now and then some of ye have your hands so troubled with an itch, that you must have them nointed with the oyle of gold, before you can fall to any good worke: and some of yee, that though your wits have good inventions, yet you cannot write without a golden pen, which indeede, best fits a fine hand. But for us in the Country, when we have washed our hands, after no foule worke, nor handling any unwholesome thing, wee neede no little Forks to make hay with our mouths, to throw our meat into them.*

Now for the purenes of your hearts, except Kings, Queenes and Princes, and such great persons, make no comparison with Country people, where yea and nay

* This is one of the earliest references to the use of forks for eating, a fashion introduced into England from Italy. See also *Wits Trenchmour*, p. 96.

are our words of truth, faith and troth are our bonds of love, plaine dealing, passages of honesty, and kinde thankes continues good neighbour-hood. A lyer is hated, a scoffer scorned, a spend-thrift derided, and a miser not beloved: a Swaggerer imprisoned, a Drunkard punished, and a Jugler whipped, and a Theefe hanged, for our hearts will harbour no such Guests. And for love, two eyes and one heart, two hands and one body, two lovers and one love ties a knot of such truth as nought but death can undoe.

Now for braines of Wisdome, I thinke hee is wiser that keepes his owne, and spends no more then needs, then hee that spends much in hope of a little, and yet may hap loose that too at last. Now for tongues of truth, let me tell you, fayre words make fooles faine, and Court holy-water will scarce wash a foule shirt cleane, except it come from such a Fountaine, as every man must not dip his finger in. But, Cousin, when hearts and hands goe together, words and deeds goe together: these are the tongues that will not faulter in their tales, but tell truth in the face of the wide world, and therefore excepting the best that may bee examples to the rest, I thinke if truth be any where, she is in the Country.

Now for the noblenesse of minds: it fitteth the persons in their places: but for us in the Country, wee had rather have old Nobles in our purses, then a bare name of noble without Nobles: the reason may be that we doe not know the nature of noblenes so well as wee doe of Nobles, and therefore wee heare onely so much

of the cost of it, that we have no heart to looke after it: but where it is truly we honour it, and say, God blesse them that have it, and if they be worthy of it well may they keepe it, and that is all I say to it.

Now to spirits of goodnes alas, there is not one in the world. Christ Jesus our Saviour said so, There is none good but God: and if there be any on earth, I thinke a good beliefe and a good life doth best expresse the nature of it.

To conclude with Vertue, in which you lay up all the treasures of life, I doubt not it is in the best, I would it were so in all with you, but bee it where it pleaseth God to send it once, I verily believe it to bee as truly in the Country as in places of higher compasse: and by your leave, let me tell you of a Riddle of my fathers o[w]ne writing, touching that rare and pretious Jewell.

There is a secret few doe knowe,
And doth in speciall places grow,
A rich mans praise, a poore mans wealth,
A weake mans strength a sicke mans health,
A Ladyes beauty, a Lords blisse,
A matchlesse Jewell where it is:
And makes where it is truely seene,
A gracious King and glorious Queene,

And this said he, is vertue, which though he understood in the Court, yet he made use of it in the Country. Now therefore good Cousin, be content with your humour, and let me alone with mine, I thinke I have

answered all your positions: and let me tell you, whatsoever you say, I verily believe that ere you die, I shall finde you rather in the roole of peace in the Country, then in the tryall of patience in the Court, except the heavens highest Grace, and under heaven our earths highest Honour, make you happier in their favours then the whole world else can make you. And now, what say you further unto mee?

COURT. I say this to you, kind Cousin, that your Fathers lessons have made you better learned then I looked for, but yet let me tell you, had you seene but one of our showes in our Triumphs, heard one of our Songs on our solemne dayes, and tasted one of our dishes, in our solemne feasts, you would never looke more on a May-game, listen more to a louzy Ballad, nor ever be in love with beefe and pudding.

COUNT. Oh Cousin, stay the Bells, I thinke you are deceived, for it may be that at one of these Showes, I might see the fruites of my labours and my poore Neighbours, flong away in gaudes and feathers, and perhaps have a proud humour, wish to be as wise as they that were no wiser then they should bee, and therefore I thinke, better tarry at home then travell abroad to no better purpose.

Now for Songs, a plaine ditty well expressed, is better with us, then a fine conceit, as faigned in the voyce as the matter. Now for your dishes of meat, I will tell you, I heard my father once report it for a truth, that a great man who lived where you live, sent him for a great dainty a Porpose Pye or two cold: which taking

very thankfully, and causing the Messenger to stay dinner with him, he cut one of them up, and very nicely taking out a peece of it, gave it to my Mother, which she no sooner had in her mouth, but it had like to have marred all with her stomacke, but she quickly conveyed it all under boord, which my Father seeing, said, Why how now, wife? What? doe you love no good meate? Yes (quoth she) but I pray you tast of it your selfe: which he no sooner did, but he made as much hast out of his mouth with it as she did, then did the Children likewise the same, and the Servants being by, their Master offred ech one a peece of it, [who] no sooner tasted of it, but they did so spit and spatter as if they had been poysoned, then he gave a peece to his Dogge, which smelt to it, and left it: by and by after came in a Miller and his Dogge to whom my Father in like manner offered a peece, but neither man nor dog would eate of it: whereupon my Father heartily laughing, with thankes to his great Lord for his kinde token, sent one of them backe againe to him with this message, Commend me, I pray you, to my good Lord, and tell him I heartily thanke his honour, and tell him, if either my selfe, or my wife, or my children, or my servants or my dog, or the Miller, or his dogge, would have eaten of it, I would never have sent one bit backe againe to him of it: but it may bee that it is more wholesome then toothsome, and hee may make a better friend with it: so, paying the messenger for his paines, sent him away with his message, which was no sooner delivered, but his Lord heartily laughed

at it. This was one of your fine dishes. Another a great Lady sent him, which was a little Barrell of Caviary,* which was no sooner opened and tasted, but quickly made up againe, was sent backe with this message, Commend me to my good Lady, and thanke her honour, and tell her we have blacke Sope enough already, but if it be any better thing, I beseech her Ladyship to bestow it upon a better friend, that can better tell how to use it. Now if such be your fine dishes, I pray you let me alone with my Country fare. And now, what say you else unto mee?

COURT. I say this, that Nature is no botcher, and there is no washing of a blacke Moore, except it bee from a little durty sweat: the Oxe will weare no Socks, howsoever his feete carry their favour: and Diogenes would bee a Dog, though Alexander would give him a kingdome: and therefore though you are my kinsman, I see it is more in name then in nature: thy breath smels all of Garlike, and thy meat tasts all of mammaday† pudding, which breaking at both ends, the stuffing runnes about the Pot. And since I see thou art like a Milstone that will not easily bee stirred I will leave thee to thy folly, till I finde thee in a better humour, for I see the Musique of thy minde hangeth all upon the base string. Farewell.

* This is probably the story which Shakespeare refers to in *Hamlet*, Act 2, Sc. 2, ''Twas Caviare to the general,' &c.

† Mammaday: a sweet meat made of boiled sugar. Compare Harvey's *Pierces Supererogation*: 'Nothing but pure mammaday, and a fewe morsels of fly-blowne Euphuisme, somewhat nicely mixed for puling stomackes.'

COUNT. Nay, soft a while, let me not be in your debt, for an ill word or two: I see truth is no lyer, all in the Court are not Courtiers, nor every man that hath witte is not truly wise, for then no man would spend breath to no purpose: an Oxes foot may bee sweeter then a Cods head, when Sockes may bee but saveguards for bare tooes in broken stockings: Garlike hath beene in more grace then Tobacco, and is yet in the Country, with them that love meate better then smoake. Diogenes is dead, and Alexander is in his grave, and better bee a manish Dogge then a dogged man. And if your good will be to your good words, you are more like a stranger then a kinseman, and for my pudding, I believe it will prove better then a Tobacco pipe. So, rather desirous to be a Milstone, not to stirre at every motion, then a feather in a Weathercocke, to turne with every gayle of winde, I will pray for your better wit, then you have showne in a selfe wild humour, and so till I finde you in more patience and lesse passion, I will leave you till wee meete againe, hoping that you will bee as I am, and will be a friend, to forget all ill humours, and ready to requite all kindnesses.

COURTIER. So will I, and so, Farewell.

Thus they parted for that time, but what fell out at their next meeting: as you like of this, you shall heare more hereafter.

FINIS

*

QUESTION. What is a Courtier?
ANSWER. An Attendant upon Majesty, a companion of Nobility, a friend to Vertue, and a hope of honour.
QUESTION. What things are chiefely to be required in a Courtier?
ANSWER. Two.
QUESTION. What are they?
ANSWER. A good body, and a good minde.
QUESTION. How are they to be used?
ANSWER. In humility and civillity.
QUESTION. To whom?
ANSWER. The first unto God, the second to man.
QUESTION. What are the proofes of a good mind?
ANSWER. Love of goodnesse, and feare of greatnesse.
QUESTION. What are the tokens of a good body?
ANSWER. Ability and agility.
QUESTION. What preserves a good minde in goodnesse?
ANSWER. Prayer and Charity.
QUESTION. And what keeps the body in strength?
ANSWER. Continence and exercise.
QUESTION. What is the chiefe grace of a Courtier?
ANSWER. The feare of God, and the favour of a King.
QUESTION. What is the Honour of a Courtier?
ANSWER. The love of vertue.
QUESTION. What is the wealth of a Courtier?
ANSWER. The love [of] a King.
QUESTION. What is the charge of a Courtier?

ANSWER. Truth in Religion, care in his Service, love to his Master, and secrecy in his trust.

QUESTION. What is the care of a Courtier?

ANSWER. To deserve well, to keepe well, to live well, and to dye well.

QUESTION. What qualities are chiefely required in a Courtier?

ANSWER. Wisdome, Valour, Learning, and Bounty.

QUESTION. What learning is most fit for a Courtier?

ANSWER. Divinity, Philosophy, and History.

QUESTION. What are the Ornaments of a Courtier?

ANSWER. Variety of Languages, observation of Travels, experience of Natures and the use of Understanding.

QUESTION. What is a Courtier most to take heed of?

ANSWER. Envious Ambition, malicious Faction, palpable Flattery, and base Pandarisme.

QUESTION. What is a Courtier chiefely to take note of?

ANSWER. The disposition of the best, the words of the wisest, the actions of the noblest, and the carriage of the fairest.

QUESTION. What things chiefely is a Courtier to be charie of?

ANSWER. His tongue and his hand, his purse and his midle finger.

QUESTION. What conversation is fittest for a Courtier?

ANSWER. Wise wits, noble spirits, faire eyes, and true hearts.

QUESTION. How should a Courtier hope of advancement?

ANSWER. With prayer to God, diligence in his service, respect of persons, and judgment in affections.

QUESTION. What discourses are fitted for a Courtier?
ANSWER. Admiration of wisdome, desert of honour, truth of valour, and life of love.
QUESTION. What friends are fittest for a Courtier?
ANSWER. The wise and the wealthy, the valiant and the honest.
QUESTION. What servants are fittest for a Courtier?
ANSWER. The expert, the faithfull, the diligent, and the carefull.
QUESTION. What is the true valour in a Courtier?
ANSWER. To feare no fortune, to be patient in adversity, to master affections, and to forgive offenders.
QUESTION. What are the follies in a Courtier?
ANSWER. Vaine discourses, idle complements, apish fancies, and superfluous expences.
QUESTION. What are the most dangerous in a Courtier?
ANSWER. To be inquisitive of Occurrents, to reveale Secrets, to scorne Counsaile, and to murmur at Superiority.
QUESTION. What things are most profitable to a Courtier?
ANSWER. A sharpe wit and a quicke apprehension, a smoth speech, and a sound memory.
QUESTION. What should a Courtier chiefely observe in a King?
ANSWER. His wisdome, his valour, his disposition, and affection.
QUESTION. What in a Councellor?
ANSWER. His religion, his reason, his care, and his judgment.
QUESTION. What in a Lord?

ANSWER. His title, his worthines, his spirit, and his carriage.

QUESTION. What in a Lady?

ANSWER. Her beauty, her portion, her parentage, and her disposition.

QUESTION. What in an Officer?

ANSWER. His knowledge, his care, his diligence, and his conscience.

QUESTION. What time is best spent in a Courtier?

ANSWER. In prayer, in study, in grave discourse, and in good exercise.

QUESTION. And what time is worst spent?

ANSWER. In devising of fashions, in fitting of fancies, in faining of Love, and in honouring unworthines.

QUESTION. What is commendable in a Courtier?

ANSWER. Concealing of discontentments, mitigating of passions, affability of speech, and courtesie in behaviour.

QUESTION. What most delighteth a Ladies eye in a Courtier?

ANSWER. Neat apparell, wise speech, to manage a Horse well, to dance well.

QUESTION. What most contenteth a King in a Courtier?

ANSWER. Religious valour, reverent audacity, humble love, and faithfull service.

QUESTION. What is most troublesome to the minde of a Courtier?

ANSWER. Conscience and patience, continence and abstinence.

QUESTION. What are most grievous to a Courtier?

ANSWER. The frowne of a King, the displeasure of a Lady, the fall of honour, and the want of wealth.

QUESTION. What friend shall a Courtier most rely upon?

ANSWER. His God, his King, his wit, and his purse.

QUESTION. What foes should a Courtier most stand in feare of?

ANSWER. Wanton eyes, glib tongues, hollow hearts, and irreligious spirits.

QUESTION. What things are necessary for a Courtier to have ever in memory?

ANSWER. Temperate speeches, moderate actions, deliberate inventions, and discrete resolutions.

AUESTION. What delights are most fit for a Courtier?

QNSWER. Riding and Tilting, hunting and hauking.

QUESTION. What is most comely in a Courtier?

ANSWER. A stayed eye, a faire hand, a straight body, and a good legge.

QUESTION. What should be hated of a Courtier?

ANSWER. Rudenes and basenes, sloathfulnesse and slovenlinesse.

QUESTION. What speciall servants of name are most fit for a Courtier?

ANSWER. A Barbour for his Chamber, a Taylor for his Wardrobe, a Groome for his Stable, and a Foote-man for his Message.

QUESTION. What is the hapinesse of a Courtier?

ANSWER. To feare God, to have the favour of a King, to be able to lend, and to have no neede to borrow.

QUESTION. What is the shame of a Courtier?

ANSWER. To take much and give nothing, to borrow

much and lend nothing, to promise much and performe nothing, and to owe much and pay nothing.

QUESTION. What should a Courtier be alwaies jealous of?

ANSWER. Insinuating spirits, intruding wits, alluring eyes, and illuding tongues.

QUESTION. What is the life of a Courtier?

ANSWER. The labour of pleasure, the aspiring to greatnes, the ease of nature, and the commaund of reason.

QUESTION. What is the fame of a Courtier?

ANSWER. A cleare conscience, and a free spirit, an innocent heart, and a bountifull hand.

FINIS